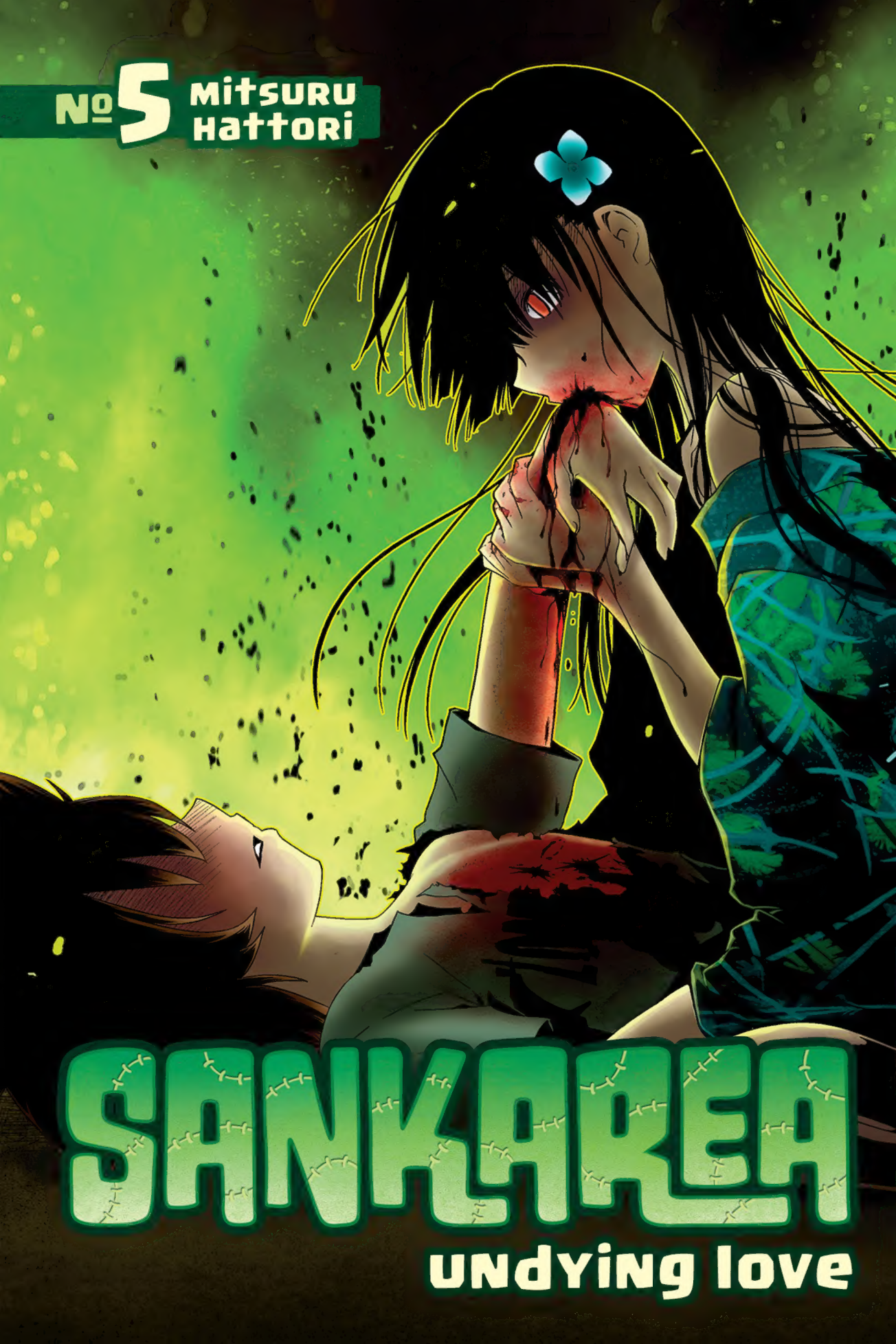

No 5
Mitsuru Hattori
SANKAREA
undying love

SANKAREA
5
MITSURU HATTORI

Kurumiya Darin Arciento

An expert in zombie research who came to Japan from the southern islands to visit "Professor Boyle" (Grandpa). She has a strange passion for her research. Despite her looks, she's younger than Rea.

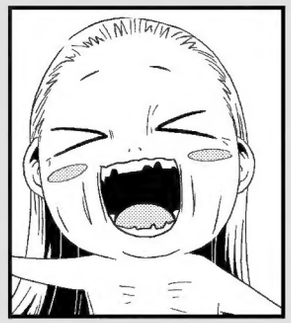
18

Darin's faithful pet. It's been zombified.

THE FURUYA FAMILY

Dad

His real name is Furuya Dohn. He's the head priest at Shiryohji Temple. He agreed to Rea and Darin living in their home, saying only, "Should be fine, right?"



Grandpa

The most mysterious organism (?) of all in "Sankarea". Apparently he has studied zombies at an overseas research facility in the past...

Bub

He was hit by a car and died, but came back to life thanks to the elixir Chihiro and Rea made.

Furuya Mero

A reliable first-year middle school student, she manages all the housework for the Furuya family. She loves to read the Heart Sutra.

STORY

It's the night of the Shiyoh Festival. Following Ranko's advice, Rea faced up to her real feelings and invited Chihiro for a stroll on the riverbank. Enveloped in the mist, the two of them quickly drew close... but at that moment, Rea suddenly and unconsciously bit into Chihiro's neck. Shocked, Rea fled, binding herself in chains and trying to leave behind all her regrets, but Chihiro caught up with her at the ruined hotel where they met. Now a lightning strike causes the building to catch fire, and an irresistible impulse once again assails Rea's body...

Furuya Chihiro

A first-year student at Shiyoh Public High School, he's an unusual boy who has loved zombies ever since he was small. He is currently trying all kinds of different things to protect Rea. He once became a half-zombie after Rea bit him.

Saohji Ranko

Chihiro's cousin and childhood friend, she's one year above him in school, and a second-year student at Sanka Girls'. She's a perky, energetic girl who is on the tennis team. Her nickname is "Wanko."

Sanka Rea

A first-year student at the private Sanka Girls' Academy, she's the daughter of a well-known family, but fell to her death trying to escape her father. Afterwards, she returned to life as a zombie girl! She's currently living with the Furuya family.

MITSURU HATTORI presents

IF... I WERE TO BECOME...
A ZOMBIE... THEN, I TOO...

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SERIALIZED IN BESSATSU SHONEN MAGAZINE, SEPTEMBER 2011 – JANUARY 2012.

SANKAREA 5

FWOOOSH
...RUYA...
...KUN...
MMMM
MAYBE I SHOULD... JUST EAT YOU...
W-WHAT ARE YOU SAYING, REA...?!
WE'VE GOT TO GET OUT OF HERE, NOW...!
WOBBLE...

AH!

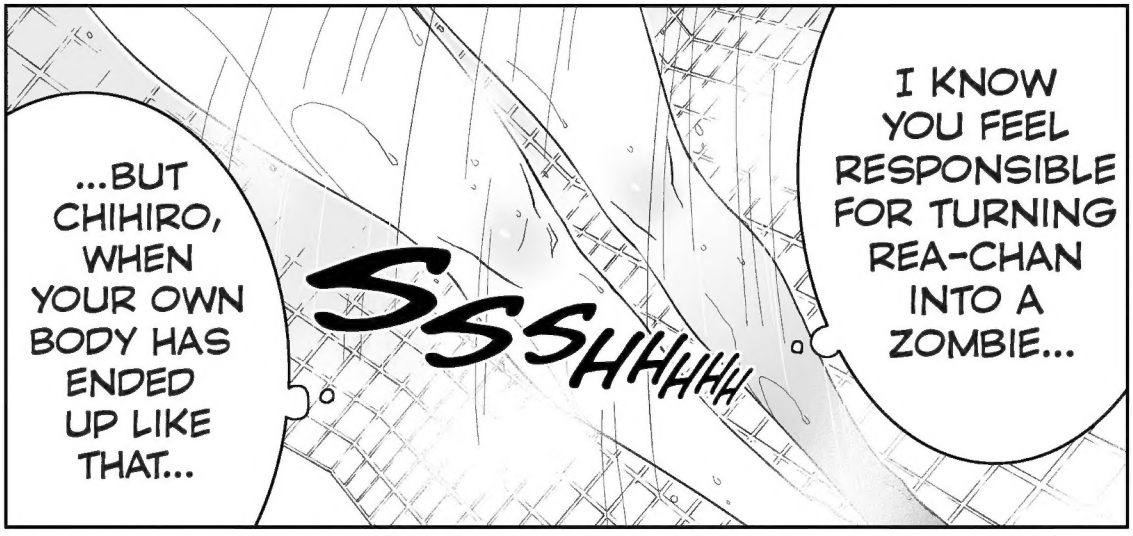
WAI-

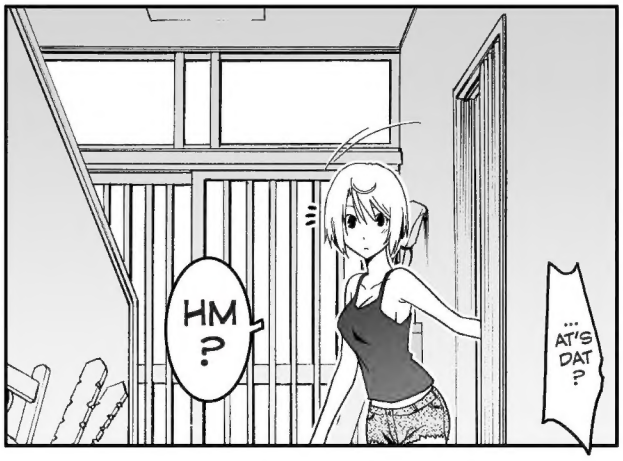
20

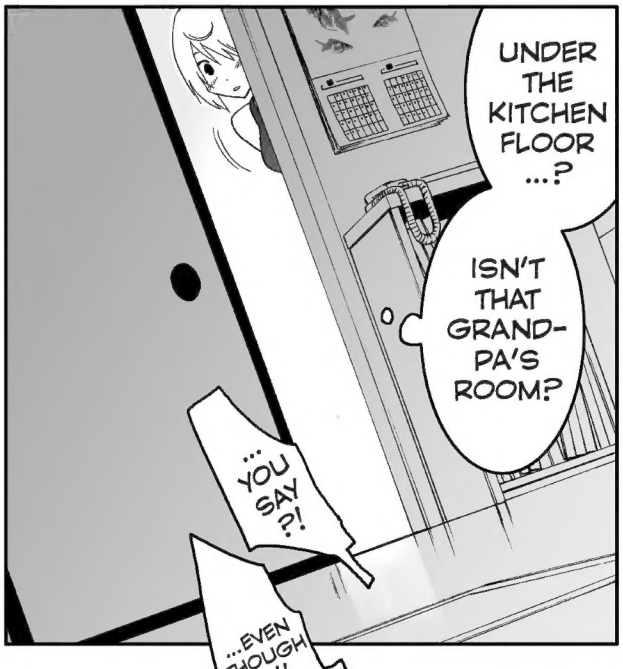
I... WANT... YOU...

✦✦ LAND OF THE DEAD ✦✦

SSSHHH
CHIHIRO...
WHY DO YOU CARE SO MUCH ABOUT REA... EVEN THOUGH SHE HURT YOU SO BADLY?


I KNOW YOU FEEL RESPONSIBLE FOR TURNING REA-CHAN INTO A ZOMBIE...
SSSHHHHH
...BUT CHIHIRO, WHEN YOUR OWN BODY HAS ENDED UP LIKE THAT...


HM ?
...AT'S DAT ?


UNDER THE KITCHEN FLOOR ...?
ISN'T THAT GRAND-PA'S ROOM?
... YOU SAY ?!
...EVEN THOUGH ...!!

GIVE SOME THOUGHT TO HOW MUCH YOU MAKE ME WORRY!
IDIOT ...
HHHHHHH

I CAN'T TRACK THEM ANY-MORE.
WHAT'S THAT ?!
SSHHHH
SH
WHAT ...?!
WHAT HAPPENED?! THEY'VE SUDDENLY DISAPPEARED ...!!
SHSHH
NEAR AS I CAN TELL FROM THEIR LAST EXCHANGE, SHE'S ALMOST TOTALLY LOST HER SENSES...
CLACK
HE COULD ALREADY BE...
WHAT ?!
THIS IS BAD... I THOUGHT I COULD USE 18 TO STOP HER IF IT LOOKED LIKE SHE WAS REALLY GOING TO ATTACK HIM, BUT...
SCREEE
GRUUUU
FWOOSH
WHAT? WHAT'S HAPPEN-ING TO CHIHIRO ?!

WHAT DOES *THAT* MEAN ?!
YOU KNOW WHERE CHI-HIRO AND REA ARE ?!
AND BY "AT-TACK," YOU MEAN...
REA'S GONE CRAZY AGAIN AND SHE'S TRYING TO HURT CHIHIRO ...?!
NOT SO MUCH "HURT" AS...
HE MIGHT HAVE BECOME HER *PREY*...
!!
AND WHILE SHE'S FOCUSED ON FEEDING, THE FLAMES ARE CLOSING IN ON THEM...
TAP
TAP
AS SHE HAS NO PAIN RECEP-TORS...
...SHE WON'T REALIZE AS HER OWN BODY BEGINS TO BURN, UNTIL FINALLY...
FSSH

SLAP
HOW CAN YOU SAY THAT SO CALMLY ?!
YOU'RE REA'S FRIEND, AREN'T YOU ?!
WAI-

SSHHH
GRAB
WHAT'S THIS ?!
SO THEY'RE HERE ?!
THEY'RE AT SOME RUINS IN THE MOUNTAINS, 6.2 KILOMETERS FROM HERE.
WAIT A SECOND!! YOU MISUNDER-STAND MY ROLE HERE...!
GRAND-PA, TELL ME WHERE THE TWO OF THEM ARE !!
GRIP
RUINS...?! YOU MEAN THAT OLD HOTEL, RIGHT ?!
WAIT, I'LL GO TOO.
DASH
GRAND-PA?!
PRO-FES-SOR ?!
IF WE LEAVE NOW, WE MIGHT MAKE IT IN TIME...

THERE CAN'T BE ANY MORE VICTIMS.
NEITHER HUMAN, NOR ZOMBIE...
WHAT'RE YOU GOING TO DO ?!
YES, I'LL ACCOM-PANY YOU.
I SUPPOSE I SHOULD EXAMINE THE CARNAGE WITH MY OWN EYES...

FSSHH
HURRY!
FWOOSH
RRRIPP

SWOOF
AH...
BLOOD ...
DAMN... THE POISON FROM BEFORE HAS WORN OFF! I DON'T HAVE THE STRENGTH OF A HALF-ZOMBIE ANYMORE...
...
GH ...
...!!
TWITCH
lick
lick

RUYA...
KUN...
BA-BUMP
BA-BUMP
NHH...
sniff
W... WAIT!
HEY!
sniff
WHOA... DAMN... SHE'S NOT JUST GONNA NIBBLE AT ME...
BA-BUMP
WHERE SHOULD I START EATING... HMM...?
SHE... CAN'T BE...
CRACK
CRACK
CRACK
CRUNCH
NGAAAA

POP
...NGH.
CRUNCH
SNIFF
SNIFF
WAIT ...!
...IT'S REALLY HAPPENING TO ME!
Just like in the movies!
...ALL THE EXPERI-ENCES OF A NOR-MAL GIRL...
I'M SORRY... I DIDN'T GIVE YOU...
CREE
CREE
CRREE
REA...
YOU... REALLY AREN'T GOING TO WAKE UP... ARE YOU...?!

AH...
...NH.
NOR...
MAL...
...?!
...HAVE A LITTLE SENSE LEFT...?!
COULD SHE STILL...
AH ...!!

I HEARD ABOUT IT FROM DARIN.
THAT "TURBID PERIOD" OR WHAT-EVER IT'S CALLED ...
FWOOSH
REA... REA !!
CAN YOU HEAR ME ?!
I MIGHT BE ABLE TO BRING REA BACK BY TALKING TO HER ...?!
SO FOR NOW ...

CRASH
FWOOOSH
YOU'RE NOT LIKE HER ZOM-BIES...
YOU DON'T FIT INTO THAT !!
BUT... THAT'S JUST DATA FROM THE TYPE OF ZOMBIES SHE KNOWS ABOUT...!
MYSTERY
MYSTERY

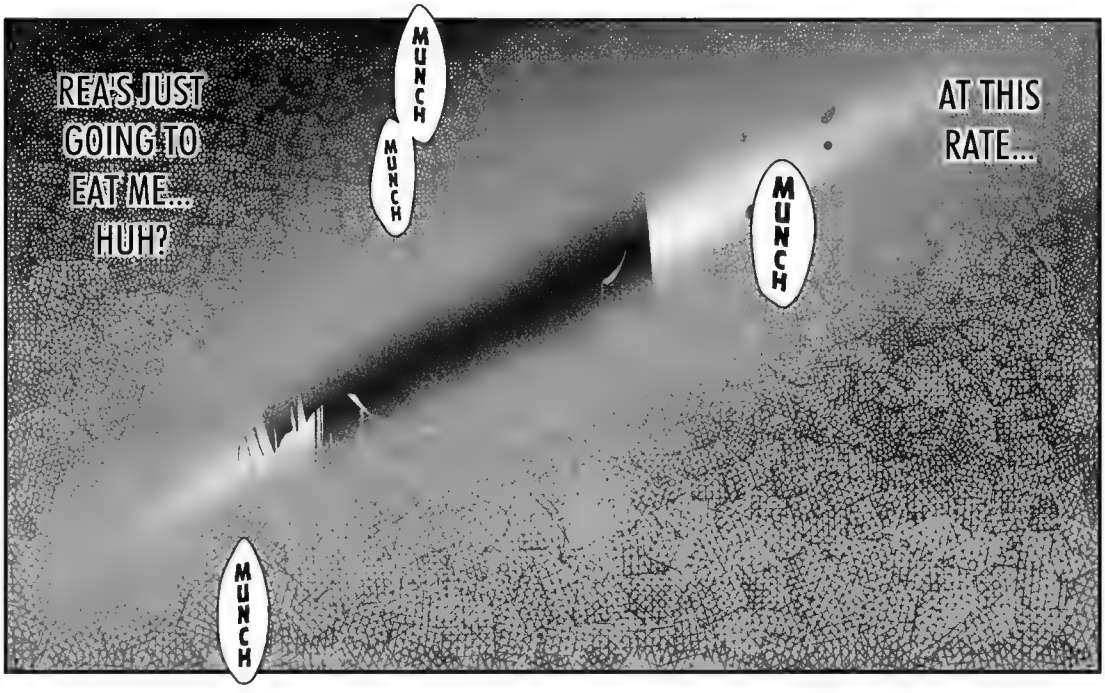
YOU CAME BACK TO LIFE WITH MY ELIXIR...
...SO YOU'RE SPECIAL !!
SPE ...
CIAL ...
TO ...
WHO ...
SPECIAL TO WHO ...?
BA-BUMP
...!! SHE RESPONDED TO ME!!
BA-BUMP
BA-BUMP
M... ME, OF COURSE !!
YOU'RE SPECIAL TO ME...
SO ...

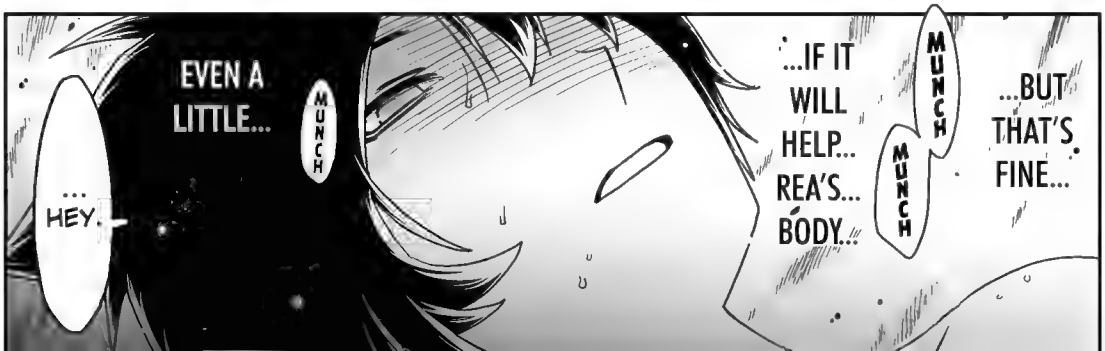
CHOMP
HEH HEH ...
GRIN
WAH...
AAAHH!!

BA-BUMP
SPE...CIAL...
I'M...HAPPY...
GWUUU...
CREEA
BA-BUMP
BA-BUMP
TWITCH
DAMN...I GET IT.
SAYING STUFF LIKE THAT...
BA-BUMP
HUFF
HFFCH
...WILL JUST MAKE HER EVEN HUNGRIER!
WAH... I CAN'T FEEL MY ARM...
NH...
GLANCE...
TWITCH
TWITCH
TWITCH
SO MUCH POISON MUST BE POURING... INTO ME...
DIZZY...
FFCH
HUFF
...

NNNGGG...
...OHHH...

THIS IS... TOTALLY A FATAL DOSE... ISN'T IT...?
MUNCH
MUNCH
MUNCH
IT'S SPREAD THROUGH MY BODY IN AN INSTANT...


REA'S JUST GOING TO EAT ME... HUH?
MUNCH
MUNCH
MUNCH
MUNCH
AT THIS RATE...


... HEY.
EVEN A LITTLE...
MUNCH
...IF IT WILL HELP... REA'S... BODY...
MUNCH
MUNCH
...BUT THAT'S FINE...

FWOOSH
IT MIGHT BE WEIRD TO SAY... AT A TIME LIKE THIS...
...BUT, BEFORE, YOU...
...SAID I ONLY CARE ABOUT YOU BECAUSE YOU'RE A ZOMBIE...
MUNCH
MUNCH

FWOOSH
BUT...
DO YOU... RE-MEM-BER?
THE FIRST TIME... WE MET... HERE...

BACK THEN... WHEN WE WERE TALKING WITHOUT KNOWING HOW FAR AWAY FROM EACH OTHER WE SHOULD SIT...
I... TOLD YOU ABOUT BUB'S ELIXIR... BUT...
drip
drip
drip
YOU EVEN... SAID YOU WANTED TO HELP...
...BUT INSTEAD YOU BECAME INTER-ESTED.
TO BE HONEST... I TOLD YOU ABOUT THAT... TO SCARE YOU OUT OF HERE...
I... THOUGHT THAT ANYONE HEARING SOMETHING LIKE THAT WOULD... GET REALLY FREAKED OUT...
SHOOF
INSIDE, I WAS REALLY SUR-PRISED ...
I...
CRUMBLE
CREAK
MMM

MUNCH
MUNCH
TWITCH
TWITCH
...THAT THERE COULD BE... A GIRL... WHO UNDER-STOOD...
BA-BUMP
POP...
...SOME-ONE... AS WEIRD... AS ME...
BA-BUMP
BA-BUMP
I SAID... I WAS ONLY INTERESTED... IN ZOMBIE GIRLS...
BA-BUMP
BUT ACTU-ALLY... SINCE I MET YOU...
BA-BUMP
BUMP
BA-BUMP

I'VE ...

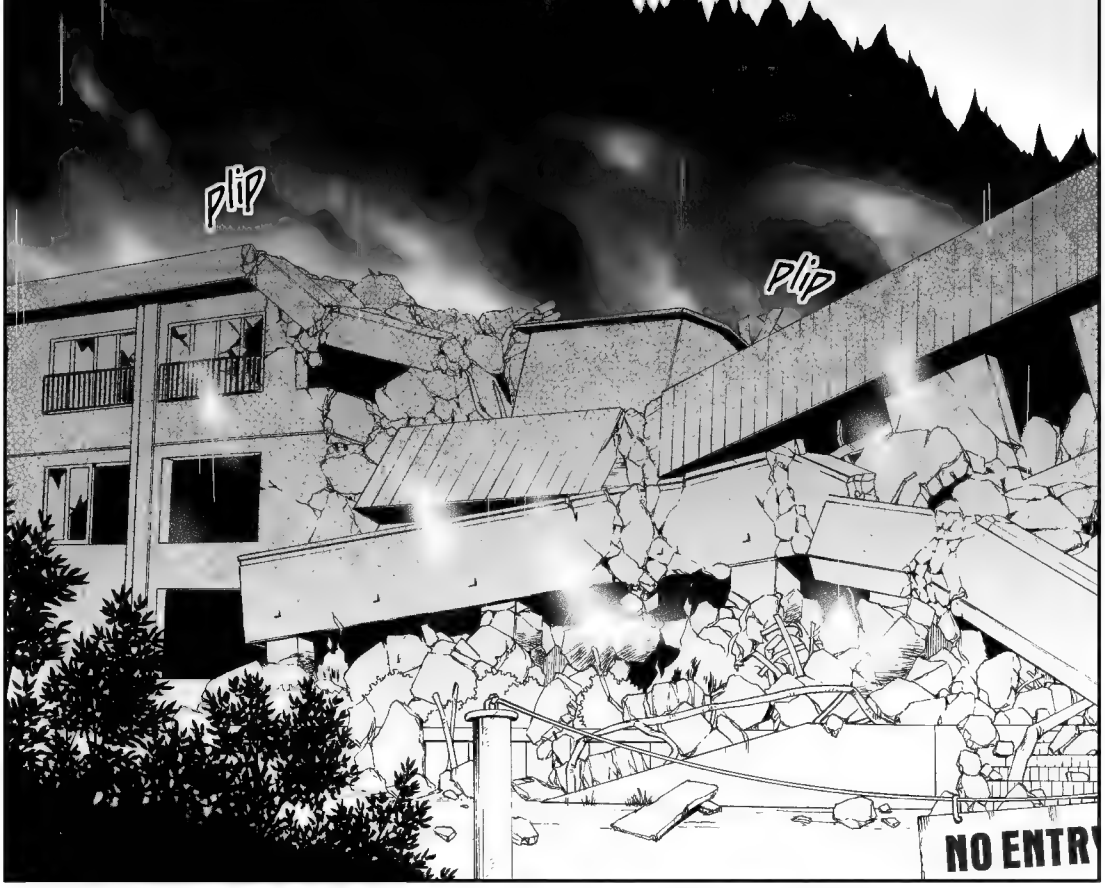
...REALLY LOVED *YOU*...

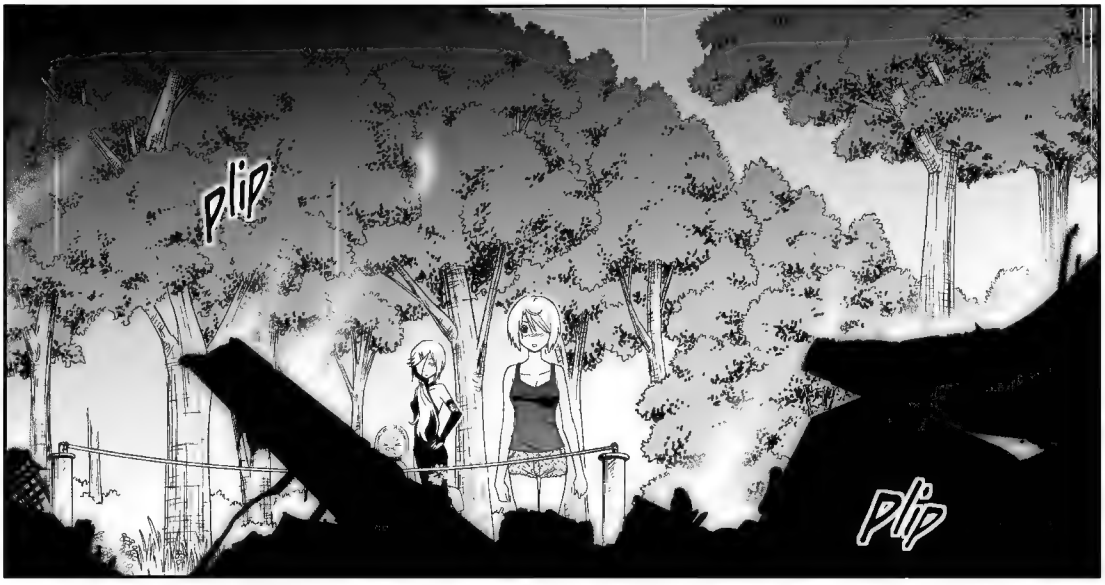
BA-BUMP
BA-BUMP
BA-BUMP
BA-BUMP
BA-BUMP
BA-BUMP
BA-BUMP
BA-BUMP
SO... ONCE YOU FINISH EATING ME...
... PLEASE GO BACK TO THE HOUSE... FOR ME ...
REA...

BA-BUMP
BA-BUMP
BA-BUMP
PLEASE ...
BA-BUMP
BA-BUMP

CLATTER
CLATTER
…
HUH
?
WHISHH

BOOM
BOOM
BOOM

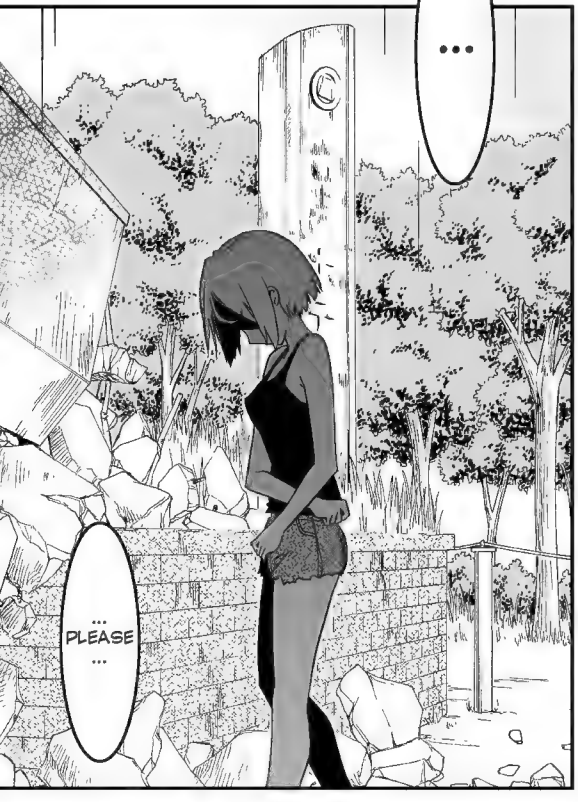

PLIP
PLIP
NO ENTR


PLIP
PLIP

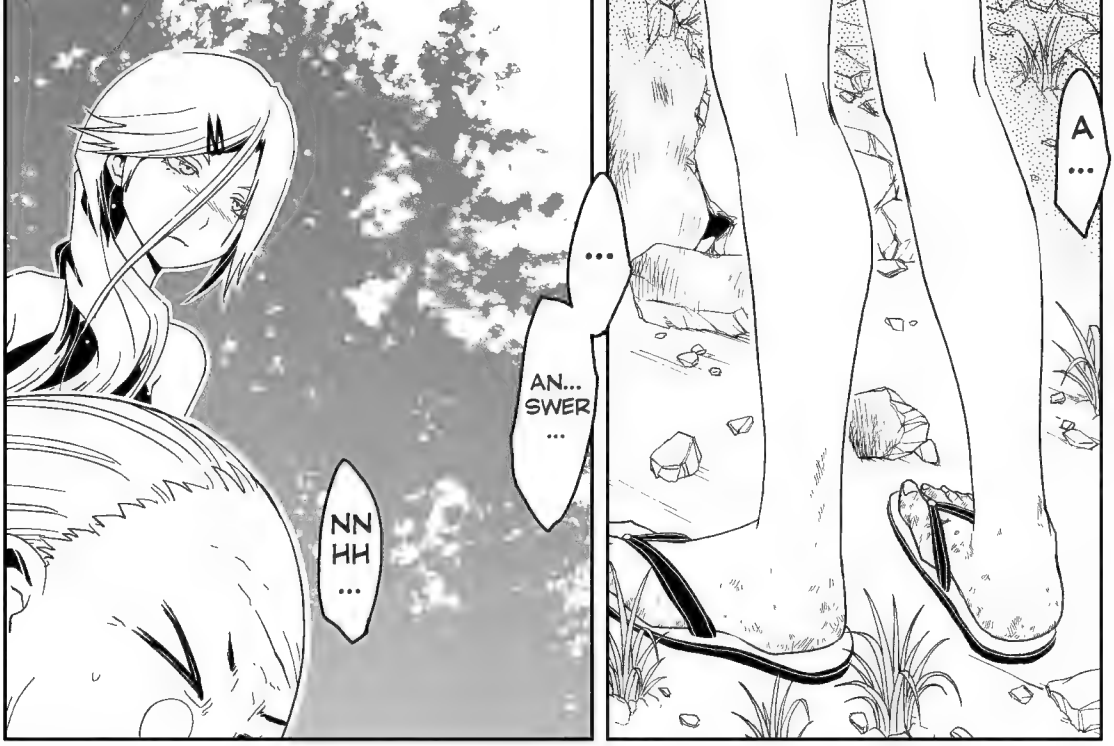
DASH
CHIHI-ROOO !!
... HIRO ...

REA-CHAN!
CHIHI-ROOO!
WHERE ARE YOU?!

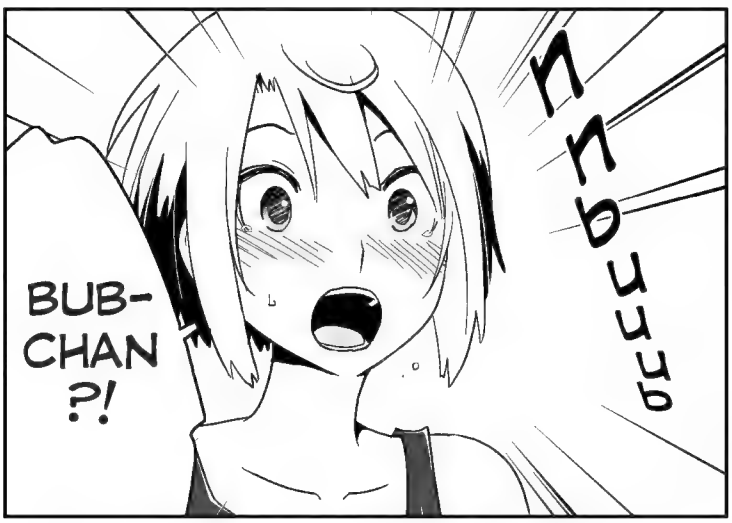
MEEE...
MEEE...

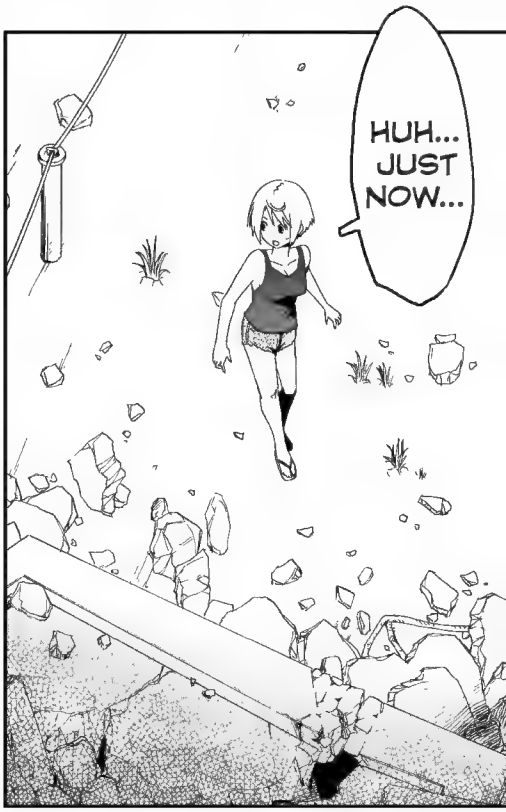

...
...PLEASE...

PLEASE ANSWER ME...!!


NN HH ...
AN... SWER ...
...
A ...

nnbuuub...


nnbuuub
BUB-CHAN ?!


HUH... JUST NOW...

buuub
nnnbuh
CHK
OVER THERE ?!
WHERE ARE YOU ...?

FWAP
FWAP
BLUUB
!!
REA-CHAN AND CHI-HIRO ...!!
OH... WAN-KO... SAN...

DASH
YOU'RE BOTH OKAY ?!
... AHH ...
THANK ... HEAVEN ...
BUMP
BA-BUMP
BA-BUMP
FU-RUYA... KUN'S... STILL... A... LIVE...
THAT... NO WAY...
SHE CAME TO HER SENSES ...?!
I'M SO SORRY... I... FURUYA-KUN... AGAIN...
WOBBLE
HEY... BLONDIE, DO FIRST AID ON CHIHIRO AGAIN !!
UH... RIGHT !
A REANIMATED CORPSE WHO WAS SUPPOSED TO BE IN THE TURBID PERIOD HAS REGAINED HER SENSES!
SKR SKR
THIS IS UN-HEARD OF ...

COULD IT BE THAT SHE...
...HOLDS THE ANSWER I WAS ONCE SEARCHING FOR...?

Mitsuru Hattori presents
SANKAREA
Tee hee hee ...

BA-BUMP
BA-BUMP
AFTER ALMOST GETTING EATEN BY REA AGAIN...
BA-BUMP
BA-BUMP
BUT MY GREATEST CONCERN WAS STILL REA'S CONDITION...
BA-BUMP
...I SPENT SEVERAL MORE DAYS TEETERING ON THE BORDER BETWEEN LIFE AND DEATH.
BA-BUMP
21
LOVE... ME...
SWAMP ZOMBIES

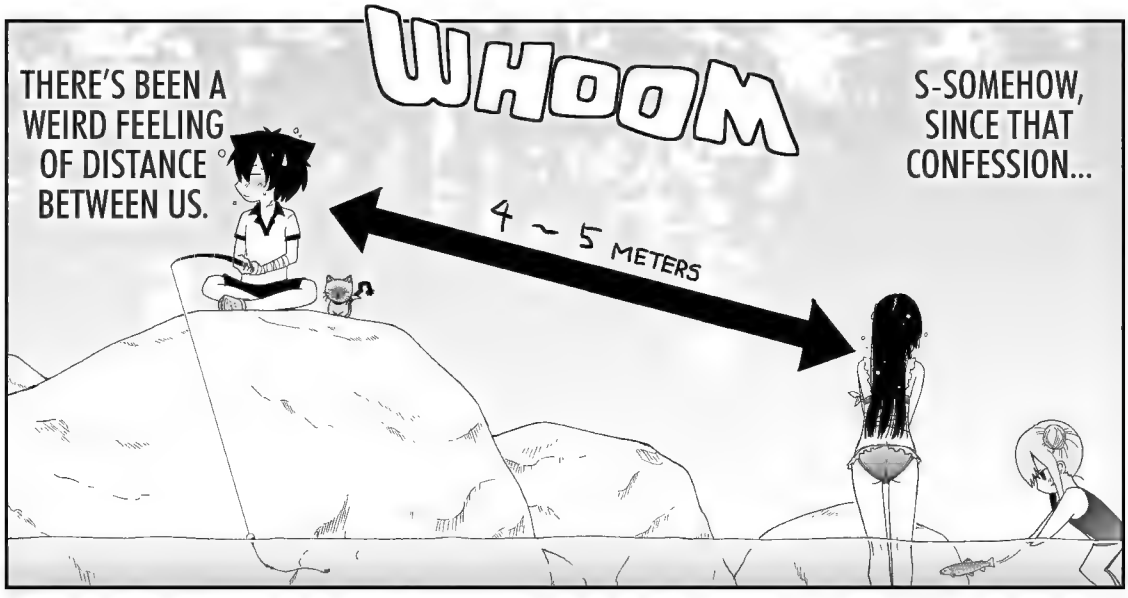
EEKK!!

SHIMMER

A HA HA ...
STOP !
EEK !
splish
splish
COME ON ...
OHH ...
Splish
splish
SPLOOOSH
MERO-CHAN, YOU LITTLE ...!

EEKK
EEKK
...
SSHHH
YOU'RE QUITE GOOD AT THAT.
AHH, I'M SORRY !!
FLOP
FLOP
SOAKED
SHE FELL INTO THAT "TURBID PERIOD" OR WHATEVER...
...LOST HER SENSES, AND TRIED TO EAT ME DUE TO HER INSTINCTS AS A ZOMBIE. STILL...
PWISH
glance...
SHHH

...
POP
I DON'T KNOW IF IT WAS DUE TO MY CONFESSION, BUT SHE JUST BARELY MANAGED TO COME BACK TO HER SENSES...
...AND DECIDED TO RETURN TO THE FURUYA HOUSE ONCE AGAIN.
... THAT'S ALL FINE AND GOOD, BUT...


WHOOM
THERE'S BEEN A WEIRD FEELING OF DISTANCE BETWEEN US.
4 ~ 5 METERS
S-SOMEHOW, SINCE THAT CONFESSION...

... SOME-HOW.
BUT... WHY DID REA COME TO HER SENSES THAT TIME ...?
I WOULD'VE THOUGHT THAT CONFESSION WOULD STIMULATE HER APPETITE INSTEAD, BUT...
glide...
SHE WAS EATING ME LIKE A PIECE OF CORN (?)...
She ate delicately because she's got manners.
Or else maybe the outer skin is delicious...
SKR
SHE ALMOST KILLED YOU, YET HERE YOU ARE.
SKR
SHK
Pool's fuuun!
SPLASH
Careful not to get swept down-stream.
SPLASH
WELL... ALL'S WELL THAT ENDS WELL, I GUESS...

HOP
SERI-OUSLY, ARE YOU REALLY FOUR-TEEN?
WHOOSH
LIKE I SAID... REA'S DIFFERENT FROM YOUR ZOMBIES.
IF IT HAD BEEN ME, I'D KEEP HER IN CHAINS FROM NOW ON.
I'M NOT RESPON-SIBLE IF SOME-THING HAPPENS TO YOU AGAIN...
EVEN MY ANTI-VENOM ISN'T PERFECT.

...
IN SUCH A SHORT TIME, YOU GOT THREE TO FOUR TIMES A FATAL DOSE OF POISON. EVEN THOUGH IT WAS TEMPORARY, IT TRAVELED THROUGHOUT YOUR BODY, DAMAGING EACH OF YOUR ORGANS...
THE AFTER-EFFECTS ARE ESPECIALLY PRONE TO SHOW UP IN YOUR BRAIN AND EYES.
IT'S A MIRACLE YOU GOT AWAY JUST LOSING A BIT OF YOUR SIGHT.
MY EYE LOOKS LIKE GRAND-PA'S NOW.
COULD GRANDPA ALSO HAVE BEEN...
HEH... YOU'RE QUITE PERCEP-TIVE.
FSSSHH
THAT'S RIGHT. PROFESSOR BOYLE RECEIVED A BIG DOSE OF POISON IN THE PAST...
IT'S WHY HE ENDED UP LIKE THAT.
Let's playyy.

Oh, come on.
Let's hug.
OF COURSE, THE PROFESSOR HAS RECEIVED MANY TENS OF TIMES THE LETHAL DOSE...
...SO HIS SIGHT IN BOTH EYES HAS BEEN SEVERELY AFFECTED.
PARTS OF HIS BRAIN, THE HIPPOCAMPUS AND PREFRONTAL CORTEX, HAVE LASTING DAMAGE, SO FROM TIME TO TIME HE FALLS INTO A STATE SIMILAR TO DEMENTIA.

GAH, SO THAT WAS ALL AFTER-EFFECTS TOO?
BY THE WAY ...
Slide

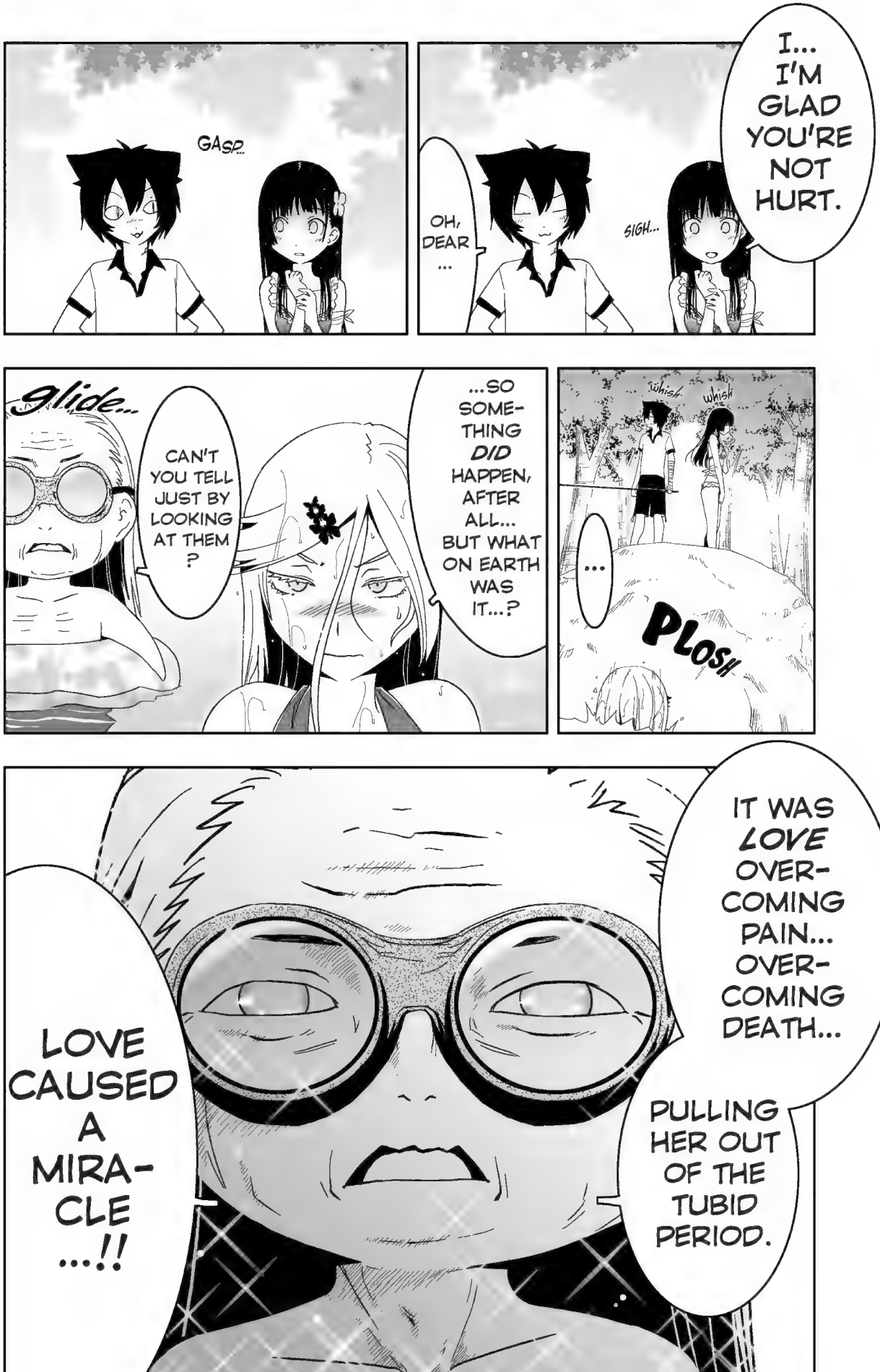
FOR A ZOMBIE ALL THE WAY INTO THE TURBID PERIOD ...
...TO REGAIN HER SENSES... IT'S NEVER HAPPENED BEFORE IN ALL THE CASES WE'VE SEEN.

WHAT DID YOU DO BACK THEN ?!
TWITCH

IT'S LIKE I TOLD YOU, RIGHT ?
THERE WAS NOTHING PARTICULARLY OUT OF THE ORDINARY WRITTEN IN THE PROFESSOR'S NOTEBOOK YOU GAVE ME.
I WANTED TO ASK THE PROFES-SOR'S OPINION, BUT HE HAD ONE OF HIS FITS...
SO... NOW THERE'S NO ONE BUT YOU...
YOU... DIDN'T YOU DO SOME-THING TO BRING HER BACK ?!
LEAN
...I FOR-GET.
YOU LIAR! WHAT ARE YOU HIDING ?
SPIT IT OUT !
SHAKE
SHAKE
twish
TH...
THAT'S ...

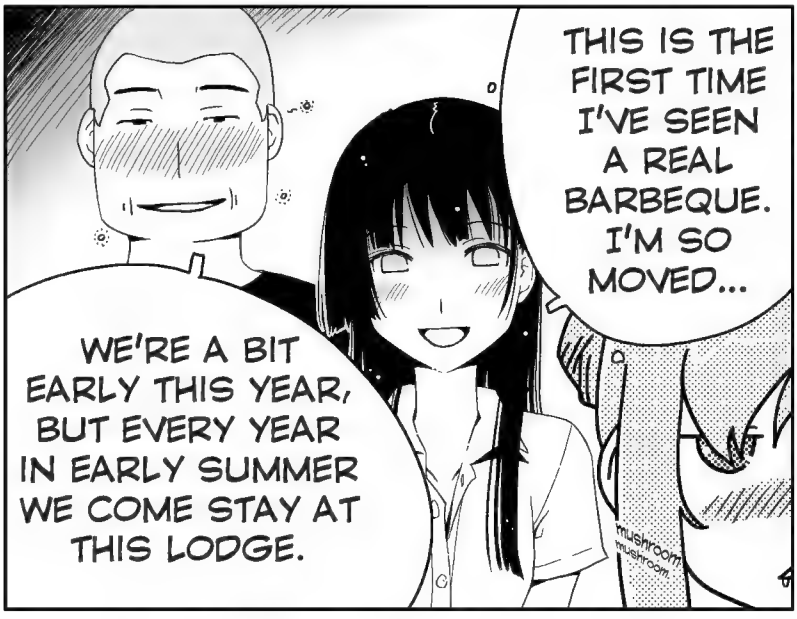
GASP
STARE
HUH?! NO... WE'RE NOT REALLY FRIENDS OR ANYTHING...
THAT'S RIGHT.
YOU LOOK LIKE YOU'RE GETTING ALONG.
SSHH
...WHAT ARE YOU TWO TALKING ABOUT?
...NH...
BY THE WAY, DO YOU REMEMBER ANYTHING THIS TIME, FROM THE FIRE UP TO THE COLLAPSE OF THE HOTEL?
JAB
HUH ...?
whish
WE WERE JUST TALKING ABOUT MY RESEARCH. DON'T MIS-UNDER-STAND.

NO!
WHAM
I REMEMBER NOTHING!!
EEEK! D... DARIN-CHAN, I-I'M SORRY!!
wiggle wiggle
EVERYONE'S IN QUITE A STATE TODAY, HUH?
EE...
SPLOOSH

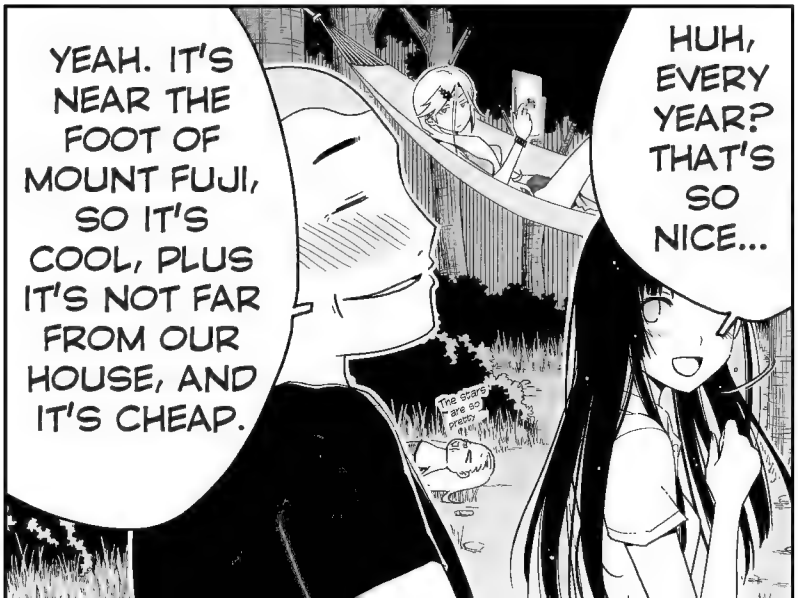

GASP...
OH, DEAR ...
SIGH...
I... I'M GLAD YOU'RE NOT HURT.
glide...
CAN'T YOU TELL JUST BY LOOKING AT THEM ?
...SO SOME-THING DID HAPPEN, AFTER ALL... BUT WHAT ON EARTH WAS IT...?
whish whish
...
PLOSH
LOVE CAUSED A MIRA-CLE ...!!
IT WAS LOVE OVER-COMING PAIN... OVER-COMING DEATH...
PULLING HER OUT OF THE TUBID PERIOD.

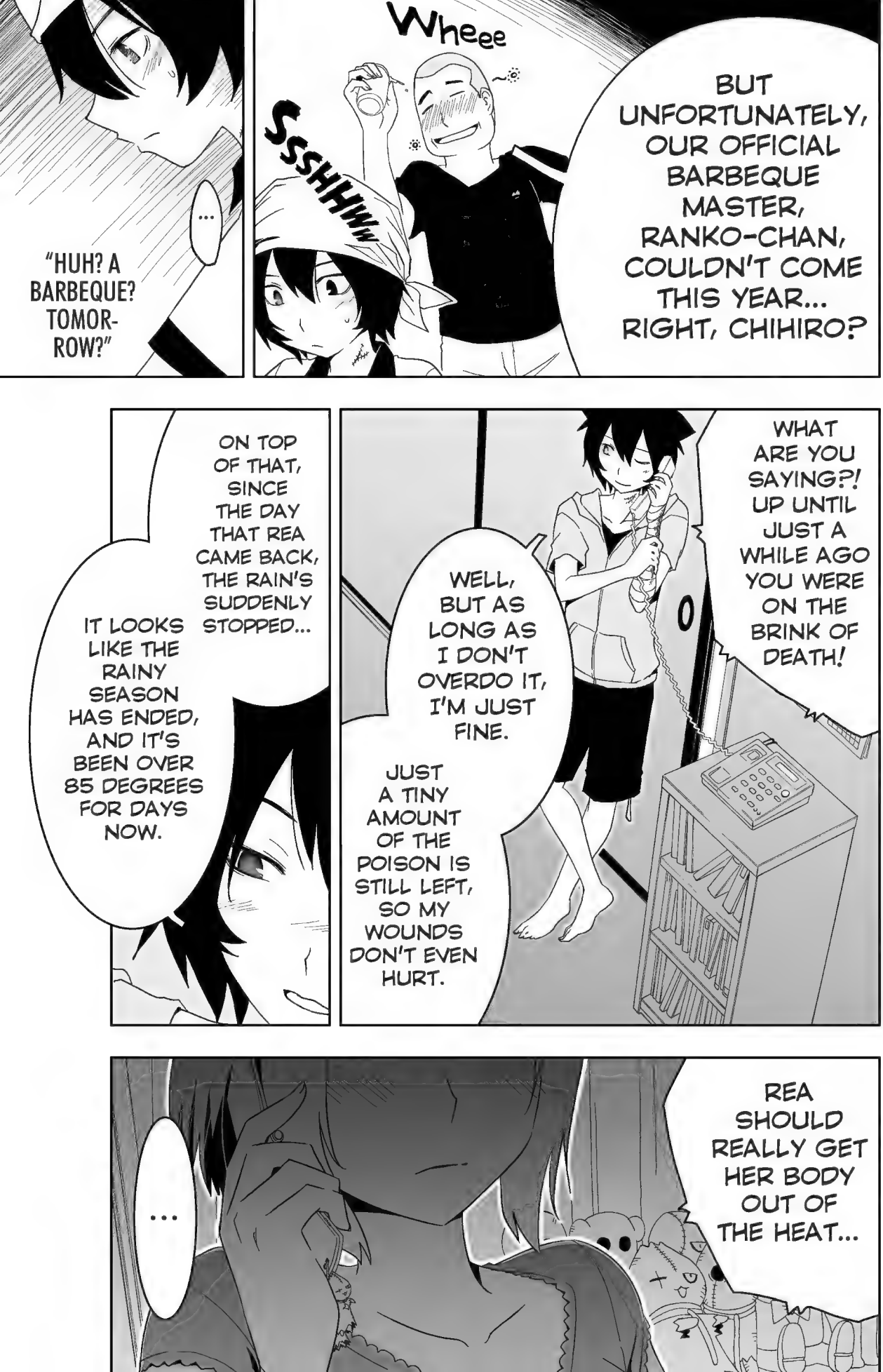
drip...
JUST KIDDIII-ING...!!
POOFF
LOVE ...?
WHAT KIND OF A THING IS THAT FOR A SCHOLAR TO SAY ...?

SSSHHWW


THIS IS THE FIRST TIME I'VE SEEN A REAL BARBEQUE. I'M SO MOVED...
WE'RE A BIT EARLY THIS YEAR, BUT EVERY YEAR IN EARLY SUMMER WE COME STAY AT THIS LODGE.

WOW... AMAZ-ING!
IT'S HOT!
CLICK
SSSHHHWWW


HUH, EVERY YEAR? THAT'S SO NICE...
YEAH. IT'S NEAR THE FOOT OF MOUNT FUJI, SO IT'S COOL, PLUS IT'S NOT FAR FROM OUR HOUSE, AND IT'S CHEAP.

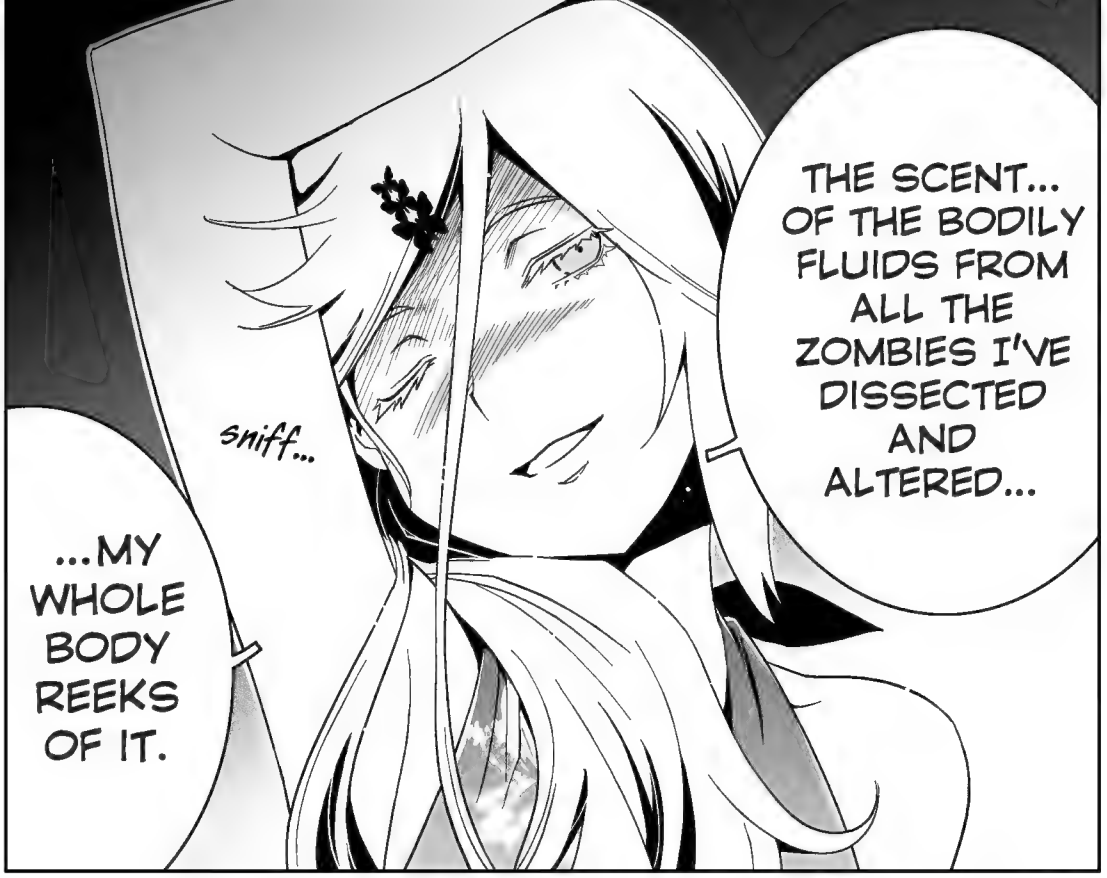

"HUH? A BARBEQUE? TOMOR-ROW?"
...
Wheee
SSSHHWW
BUT UNFORTUNATELY, OUR OFFICIAL BARBEQUE MASTER, RANKO-CHAN, COULDN'T COME THIS YEAR... RIGHT, CHIHIRO?
WHAT ARE YOU SAYING?! UP UNTIL JUST A WHILE AGO YOU WERE ON THE BRINK OF DEATH!
WELL, BUT AS LONG AS I DON'T OVERDO IT, I'M JUST FINE.
JUST A TINY AMOUNT OF THE POISON IS STILL LEFT, SO MY WOUNDS DON'T EVEN HURT.
ON TOP OF THAT, SINCE THE DAY THAT REA CAME BACK, THE RAIN'S SUDDENLY STOPPED...
IT LOOKS LIKE THE RAINY SEASON HAS ENDED, AND IT'S BEEN OVER 85 DEGREES FOR DAYS NOW.
REA SHOULD REALLY GET HER BODY OUT OF THE HEAT...
...

DO YOU REAL-LY...
DO YOU REALLY HAVE TO GO THAT FAR FOR HER...?
HUH ?
HOW CAN YOU KEEP ACTING LIKE THAT ?!
SHE TRIED TO EAT YOU TWICE, YOU KNOW, CHIHIRO ...?
IT... IT'S YOUR OWN FAULT IF THAT MONSTER ATTACKS YOU AGAIN!
BUT YOU STILL ...
SQUEEZE...

CLATTER
!
HEY, WANKO !! WHAT DID YOU JUST...
...I'M BUSY WITH MY TENNIS CLUB TOMOR-ROW, SO...
CLICK
OH ...
...YOU GOT A CALL FROM WANKO-SAN?
UM... YEAH... SHE SAID SHE CAN'T MAKE IT TOMORROW. WERE YOU LISTENING THIS WHOLE TIME...?
NO, I JUST GOT OUT OF THE TUB AND I WAS ABOUT TO GO UPSTAIRS, BUT I HEARD TALKING IN THE KITCHEN, SO...
FROM THE WAY YOU WERE TALKING, I THOUGHT IT MIGHT BE WANKO-SAN.
IS THAT RIGHT?

SHE'S PROBABLY CALMED DOWN FOR NOW, BUT IF I DON'T DO SOMETHING, SHE'LL DO IT AGAIN...
IT'S TRUE THERE'S NO GUARANTEE REA WON'T ATTACK ME AGAIN...
I SEE... WANKO-SAN CAN'T COME, THEN...
TH... THANK YOU.
L... LOOK, REA, TOASTED HYDRAN-GEA.
To go with the occasion.
NNH-WAA !!
SSHHWW
BRO-THER, THEY'RE TURN-ING INTO CHAR-COAL.
AHAHA... DO YOU LIKE IT BETTER RAW, BUB-CHAN?
OH ...
sniff sniff
...
BUB-CHAN, YOU WANT SOME TOO?

NOW THAT YOU MEN-TION IT...
THERE'S NO SIGN THAT BUB IS IN THE TURBID PERIOD, IS THERE ?
THERE'S SOMETHING OF A CASE-BY-CASE DIFFERENCE IN HOW LONG IT TAKES FOR SYMPTOMS TO SHOW.
Again...
EVEN SO, HIS BODY'S STILL GRAD-UALLY ROT-TING ...
TWITCH!
...SO HE MIGHT BE SHOWING SYMPTOMS WHEN YOU'RE NOT THERE TO SEE.
ZOOM
HEY, WHY DOES BUB RUN AWAY EVERY TIME HE SEES YOU?
I've been thinking about this for a while...
IT COULD BE MY SCENT...


THE SCENT... OF THE BODILY FLUIDS FROM ALL THE ZOMBIES I'VE DISSECTED AND ALTERED...
sniff...
...MY WHOLE BODY REEKS OF IT.

GAH, THAT THING'S A ROBOT?
HE'S NOT A ZOMBIE, THEN.
I thought there was a weird creepiness about him...
BY OUR STANDARDS, BODIES WITH AT LEAST 67% REMAINING ORGANIC TISSUE ARE STILL ZOMBIES.

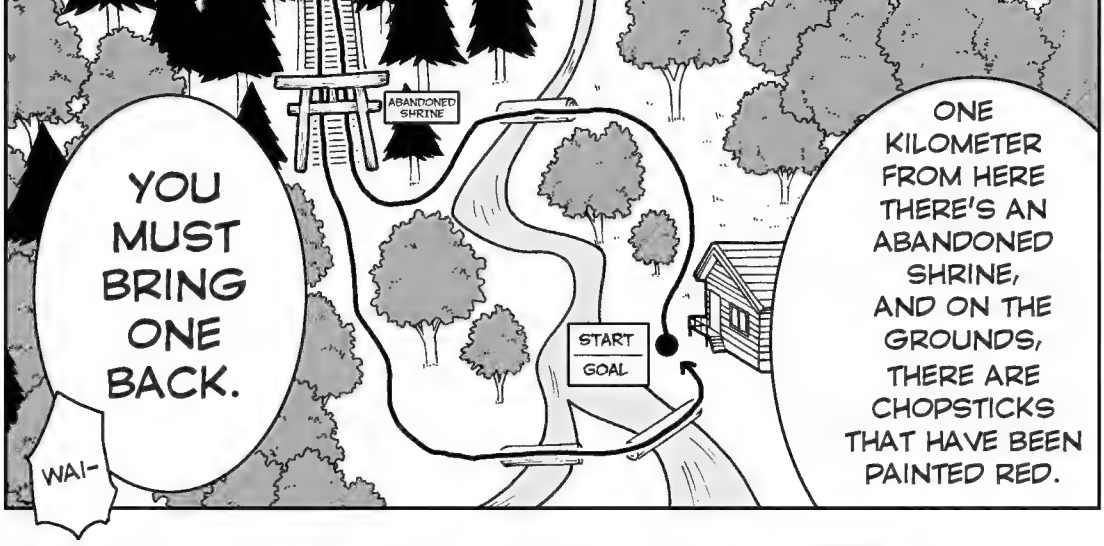
B... BY *ALTERED* YOU MEAN, MESSING WITH THEIR BRAINS AND STUFF?
WELL, THAT'S ABOUT RIGHT. PLAYING WITH THE HEADS OF THE SELFISH ONES AND MAKING THEM OBEDIENT...
OR LIKE WITH 18, SURGICALLY REMOVING THE DECAYED PARTS AND HALF-MECHANIZING THEM.

I... IS THAT SO...?
MORE IMPORTANTLY, OUR LAST DISCUSSION...
OKAY!

THIS IS YOURS, DARIN-CHAN.
YOU'RE HAVING ANOTHER TOUGH DISCUS-SION, HUH?
...THANKS.
GRAB
HEY, DARIN-CHAN, WHY DON'T WE ALL EAT TOGETHER FROM TIME TO TIME?
SOR-RY...
...BUT I'VE GOT NO INTEREST IN PLAYING "HAPPY FAMILY."
SHE ALWAYS EATS ALONE, DOESN'T SHE?
skr
skr
EVEN THOUGH SHE'S HERE ON A HOME-STAY...
LET HER BE. THAT'S JUST HOW SHE IS.
MUNCH MUNCH

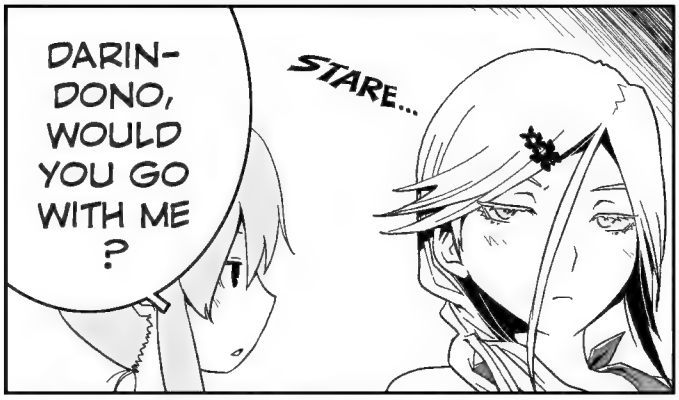
WELL THEN, EVERYONE. AS I THINK IT'S STILL TOO EARLY TO SLEEP, HOW ABOUT SOME ENTERTAINMENT?
HM? WHAT KIND?
CLICK
A TEST OF COUR-AGE.

WH...
WOW, SOUNDS FUN!
AH HAHA, WHY NOT?
WHY NOT? WE DID COME ALL THE WAY OUT TO THE MIDDLE OF THIS FOREST, AFTER ALL.
... BUT.
YOU! YOU KNOW I HATE STUFF LIKE THAT...
SHUT UP!!
HOW ARE YOU OKAY WITH ZOMBIES, BUT CAN'T STAND GHOSTS?
SHAKE
SHAKE
WHAT SHOULD I DO IF A DEAD PERSON REALLY DID APPEAR ...?
I can't point it out...
...


ABANDONED SHRINE
START
GOAL
ONE KILOMETER FROM HERE THERE'S AN ABANDONED SHRINE, AND ON THE GROUNDS, THERE ARE CHOPSTICKS THAT HAVE BEEN PAINTED RED.
YOU MUST BRING ONE BACK.
WAI-

NO, GROUPS OF TWO SEEM GOOD.

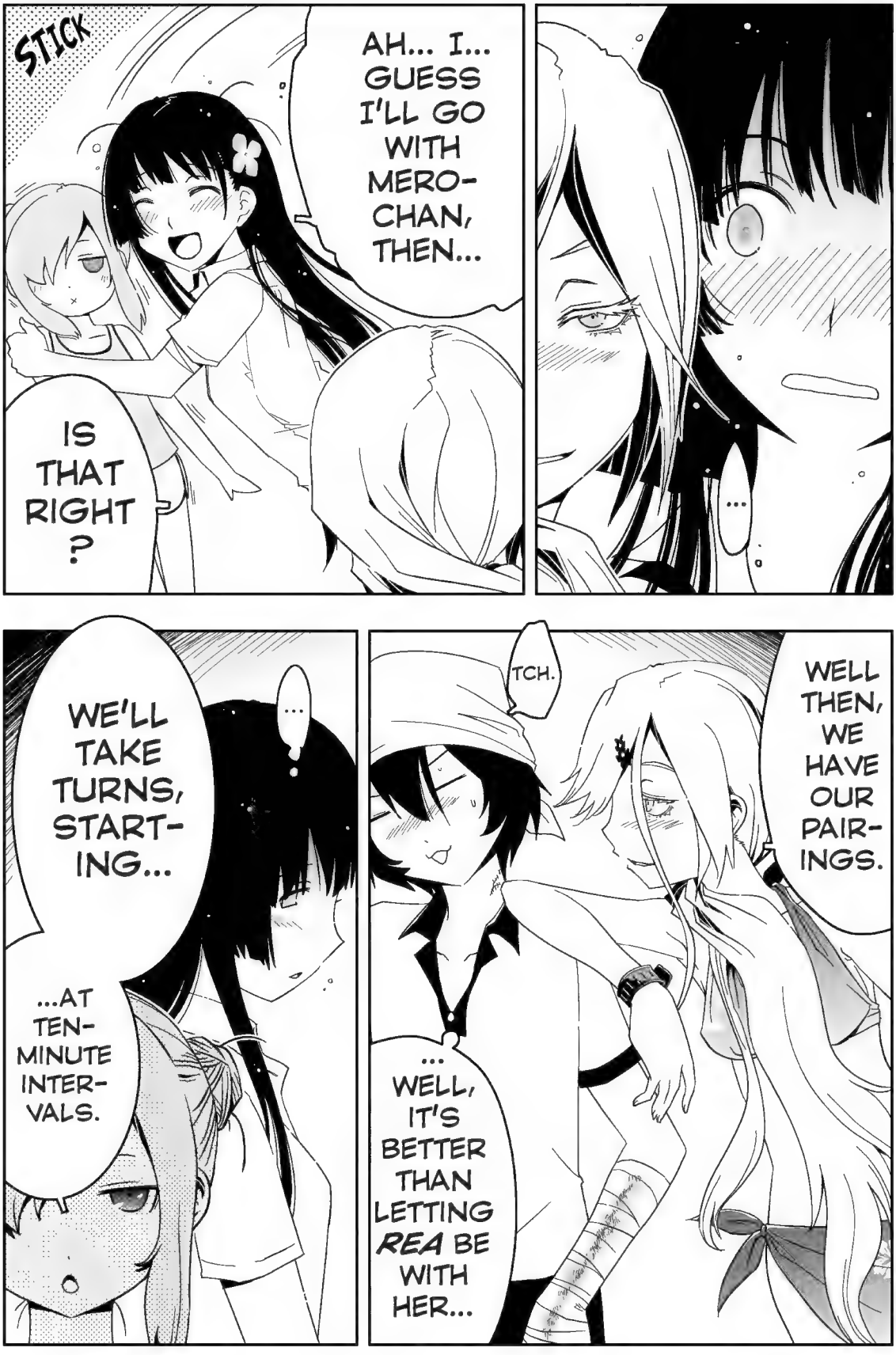
WHEN'D YOU HAVE THE TIME TO PREPARE SOMETHING LIKE THAT?
I PLANTED IT DURING THE DAY WHEN I WENT FOR A WALK BY MYSELF.
ARE WE EACH GOING ALONE ?!


DARIN-DONO, WOULD YOU GO WITH ME ?
STARE...

I'LL TAKE GRANDPA, SO YOU YOUNG-STERS ENJOY YOUR-SELVES AFTER-WARDS.
fwish
Heard
...

NO...
...

glide...
I...
...THINK I'LL GO WITH HIM.
H... HUH?!
THUNK
OH MY, AM I NOT GOOD ENOUGH?
WHAT'S THIS, ALL OF A SUD-DEN...?!
HUH...?
IT DOESN'T MAKE SENSE FOR ME TO PAIR UP WITH YOU!!
OHH, IS THAT SO?
WELL THEN, I'M FINE WITH HER.
SSSLIDE...
A... AH!! WAIT, WAIT...!!


STICK
AH... I... GUESS I'LL GO WITH MERO-CHAN, THEN...
IS THAT RIGHT?
...
WELL THEN, WE HAVE OUR PAIR-INGS.
TCH.
... WELL, IT'S BETTER THAN LETTING REA BE WITH HER...
...
WE'LL TAKE TURNS, START-ING...
...AT TEN-MINUTE INTER-VALS.

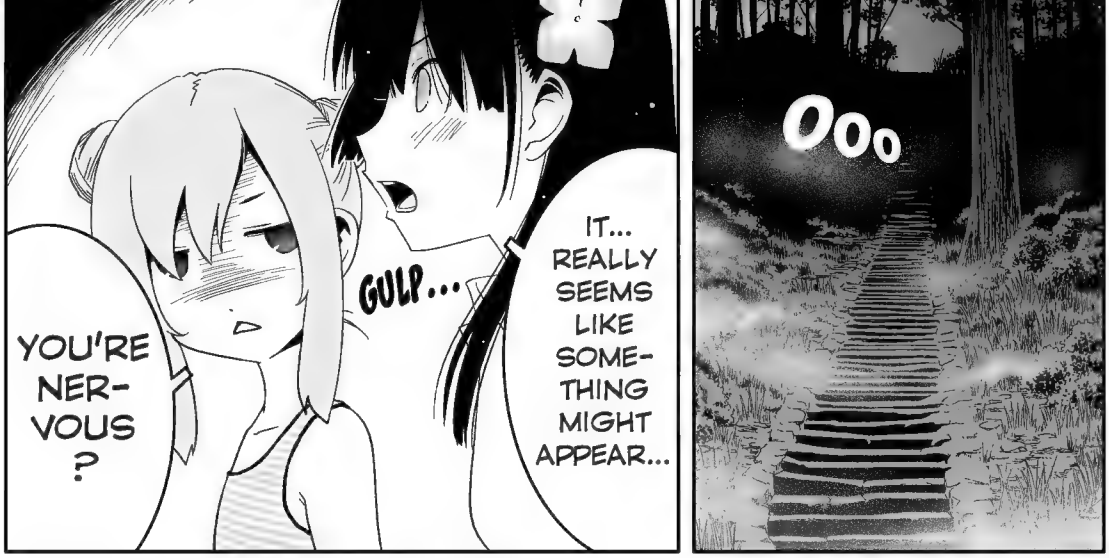
WHAT ARE YOU SCHEM-ING?
OH MY, "SCHEM-ING" SOUNDS SO WRONG.
skr
FWISH
FWISH
skr
skr
skr
H...
skr
HEY... YOU...
HOO
HOOO
PATHETIC... SO EVEN THOUGH YOU LIKE ZOMBIES AND CAN GO INTO RUINS BY YOURSELF AT NIGHT, YOU'RE SCARED OF SOMETHING AS UNSCIENTIFIC AS GHOSTS?
STARE...
S... SHUT UP!! THAT'S SOME-THING ELSE ENTIRELY !!
SHUDDER
CRKL CRKL
NH...
...

Slide
HEY.
WELL... I'VE ALSO BECOME UNABLE TO COMPLETELY DENY THE UNSCIEN-TIFIC...
WOULD YOU...
...TEACH ME ABOUT LOVE?
Huhhh...?

22 I... MADE... YOU...

✦ ✦ ✦ THE DESCENT ✦ ✦ ✦

BAM
SHUDDER
SHUDDER
THE ATMO-SPHERE IS REALLY SOME-THING AT NIGHT.
Oo
IS THIS IT ...?!
WHOA ..
Ooo


IT... REALLY SEEMS LIKE SOME-THING MIGHT APPEAR...
GULP...
YOU'RE NER-VOUS ?
Ooo

I MEAN, MY HEART ISN'T EVEN RACING RIGHT NOW!!
T... THAT'S NOT IT !!
WHAM
SHHH

...BY THE WAY, WAS IT OKAY ?
HM ?
TAP
TAP
...SO IF WE STICK AROUND HERE, FURUYA-KUN WILL CATCH UP TO US.
TAP
WE LEFT FIRST ...
TAP

DID YOU NOT WANT TO BE PAIRED WITH MY BROTHER?
W... WHAT ARE YOU SAYING ALL OF A SUDDEN, MERO-CHAN?!!
THERE'S NO USE HIDING IT.
Heh Heh Heh
...ACTU-ALLY, I'M A LITTLE RELIEVED.
RIGHT NOW... I FEEL LIKE IT MIGHT BE BETTER TO LEAVE A LITTLE DISTANCE BETWEEN ME AND FURUYA-KUN...
...SO I THINK DARIN-CHAN MUST HAVE BEEN THINKING ABOUT ME WHEN SHE DECIDED THE PAIRS...

MY BROTH-ER...
!
ARE YOU SATIS-FIED WITH THAT?
YES... FOR THE TIME BEING...
NOT YET...
...
GRIP...
MY HEAD WAS ALL FOGGY...
I DON'T KNOW IF HE REALLY MEANT THE WORDS HE SAID BACK THEN...
I THINK MY BROTHER REALLY LIKES YOU, REA-DONO ...
HUH... B... BUT THAT'S, UM... I DON'T KNOW THAT YET!!
NO, THAT'S NOT TRUE.
FLAT
NOT TO MENTION... THERE MIGHT BE SOMEONE HE LIKES MORE THAN ME...

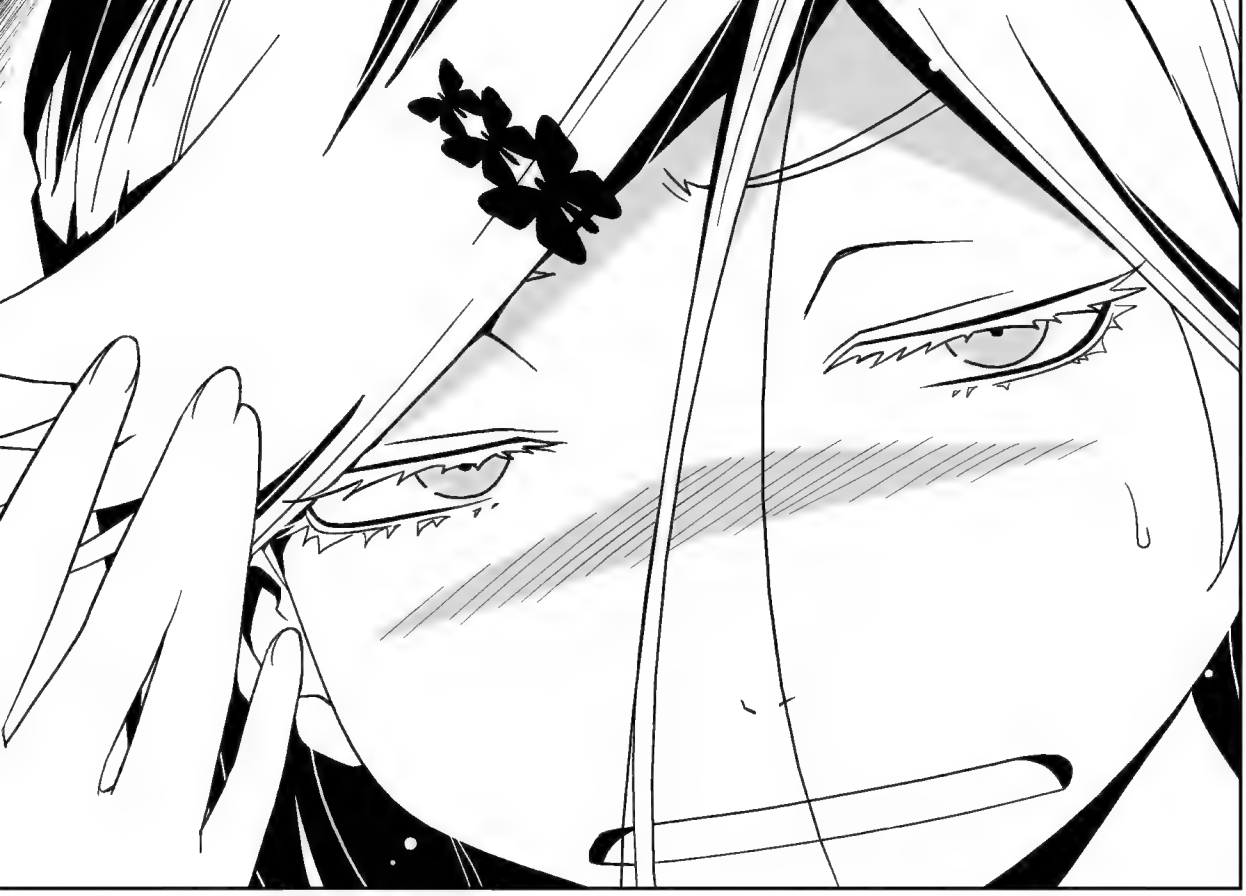
...!!
I'VE BEEN AT MY BROTHER'S SIDE, WATCHING HIM, FOR 12 YEARS, SO I UNDERSTAND HIS FEELINGS, EMOTIONS, AND TENDENCIES QUITE CLEARLY.
HMM, IS THAT RIGHT ...?
YOU REALLY LOVE YOUR BROTHER, DON'T YOU, MERO-CHAN ?
EH HEH HEH
SO THEN WE'RE RIVALS.
...
WHY WOULD WE BE ?
SLIDE...
HEY ...

WOULD YOU...
... TEACH ME ABOUT LOVE ?
Huhh...
HEY ...
POKE
I'VE ... NEV-ER ...
... HAD FEEL-INGS LIKE THIS BE-FORE.
WAIT A SEC !
SAG

DON'T YOU LIKE ME ...?
YOU... THAT WAS WHY YOU PAIRED UP WITH ME...?!
I'M GRATEFUL THAT YOU SAVED MY LIFE...
...BUT... I COULD NEVER LOVE YOU !!
SHF...
YOU'RE THE ONLY ONE... WHO CAN TEACH ME...
THUD

OH, REAL-LY ?
I NEVER ...
FWISH
...SAID ANYTHING ABOUT FALLING *IN LOVE* WITH YOU, DID I?
HUH...?
WHAT EXACT... KIND OF THING DID YOU DO ?!
POKE
POKE
TELL ME, SPE-CIFI-CALLY !!
?!
VWOOM
WHAT I WANT TO KNOW ABOUT IS THE *ACT OF LOVE* THAT YOU TWO PERFORMED THAT DAY !!

DID YOU DO [BLEEEEP]?! HOW DID SHE REACT?
HU-HHH?!
HOW DID YOU FEEL ABOUT IT AFTER-WARD?!
OH, AND WAS IT YOUR FIRST TIME?!
WAI-
WHAT ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT?
I MEAN, YOU'RE FOURTEEN! WHAT ARE YOU ASKING...?
OH MY.
AGE HAS NOTHING TO DO WITH IT, DOES IT?
I WANT TO KNOW FOR MY RE-SEARCH.
WOOSH
SO THAT, IN THE FU-TURE...
...WHEN THE SYMPTOMS OF THE TURBID PERIOD RETURN, WE CAN USE THIS TO DEAL WITH IT. RIGHT?
...I GET IT.
HMM?



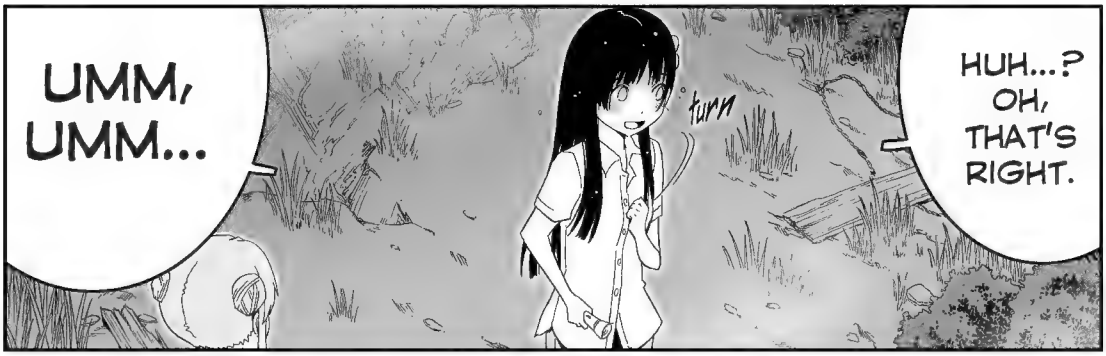
...
HUH?
Confession?
JUST THAT...?
NOD
NOD
...

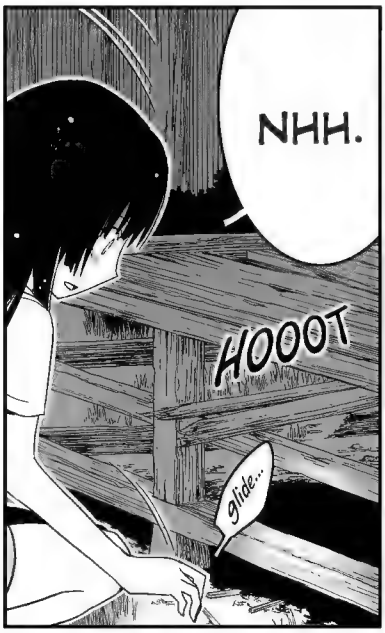
HMMM. THIS MAKES LESS AND LESS SENSE...
FLOP...
T... THAT'S WHAT I TOLD YOU!!

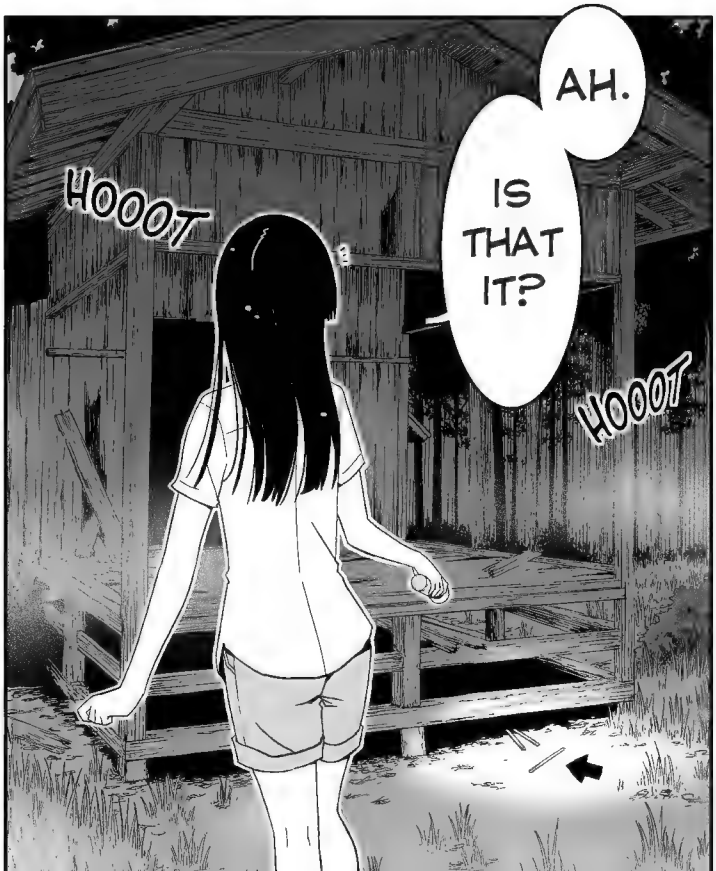
GRRR
IT IS A BIG DEAL!
MY PRIDE AS A RESEARCHER WON'T ALLOW IT!
...THAT IT'S COME TO THIS...
SO NOW...
mutter
mutter
THAT KIND OF REACTION ISN'T POSSIBLE FOR A ZOMBIE...
FOR HER TO HAVE UNDERSTOOD THE CONFESSION AND RETURNED TO HER SENSES...
mutter
mutter
IT'S NOT POSSIBLE... NOT POSSIBLE AT ALL...
WHAT'S THE BIG DEAL? JUST BECAUSE YOU DON'T UNDERSTAND THE LOGIC...
science girl...
GRRRRRR
I'LL BREAK YOUR HEAD OPEN FIRST.
...I'LL HAVE TO OPERATE AND RESEARCH HER BRAIN DIRECTLY, AFTER ALL...

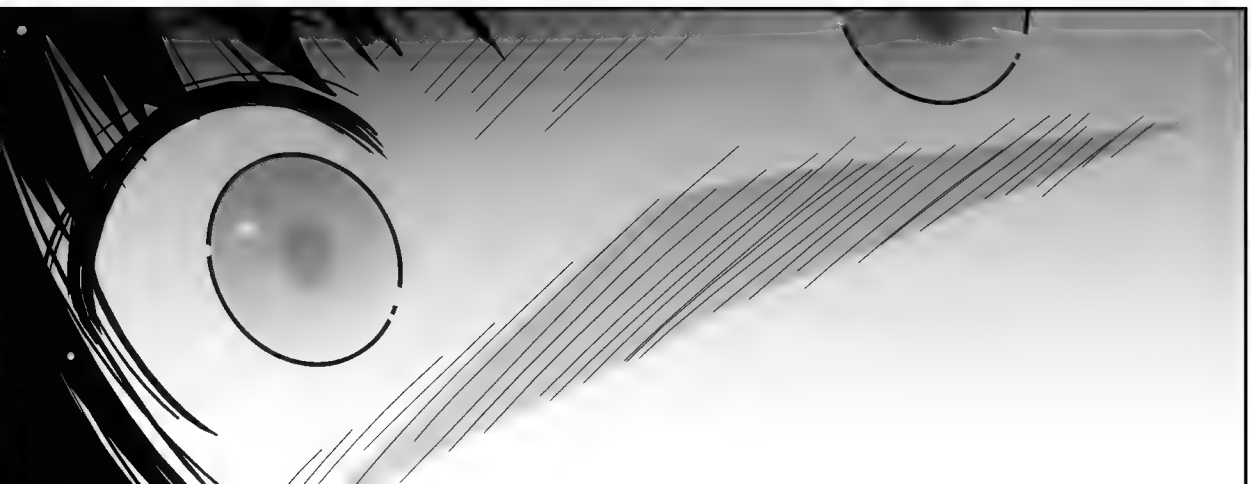
SKRRR...
WE MADE IT...
WHOA... IT'S REALLY RUNDOWN, ISN'T IT?
HOOOT
WELL, IT *IS* AN ABANDONED SHRINE, AFTER ALL.
HOOOT
THERE'S A FISSURE THERE, SO BE CAREFUL.
IT LOOKS LIKE IT WAS CAUSED BY A BIG EARTHQUAKE.
WOW, YOU'RE RIGHT.
Looks dangerous ...

A BREEZE FROM THE HOLE ...?
WE NEED TO GET THE RED CHOPSTICK QUICKLY.
IF WE WASTE TIME, THEN THE OTHER TWO PAIRS WILL CATCH UP.
Here's a light.
FWOOO...

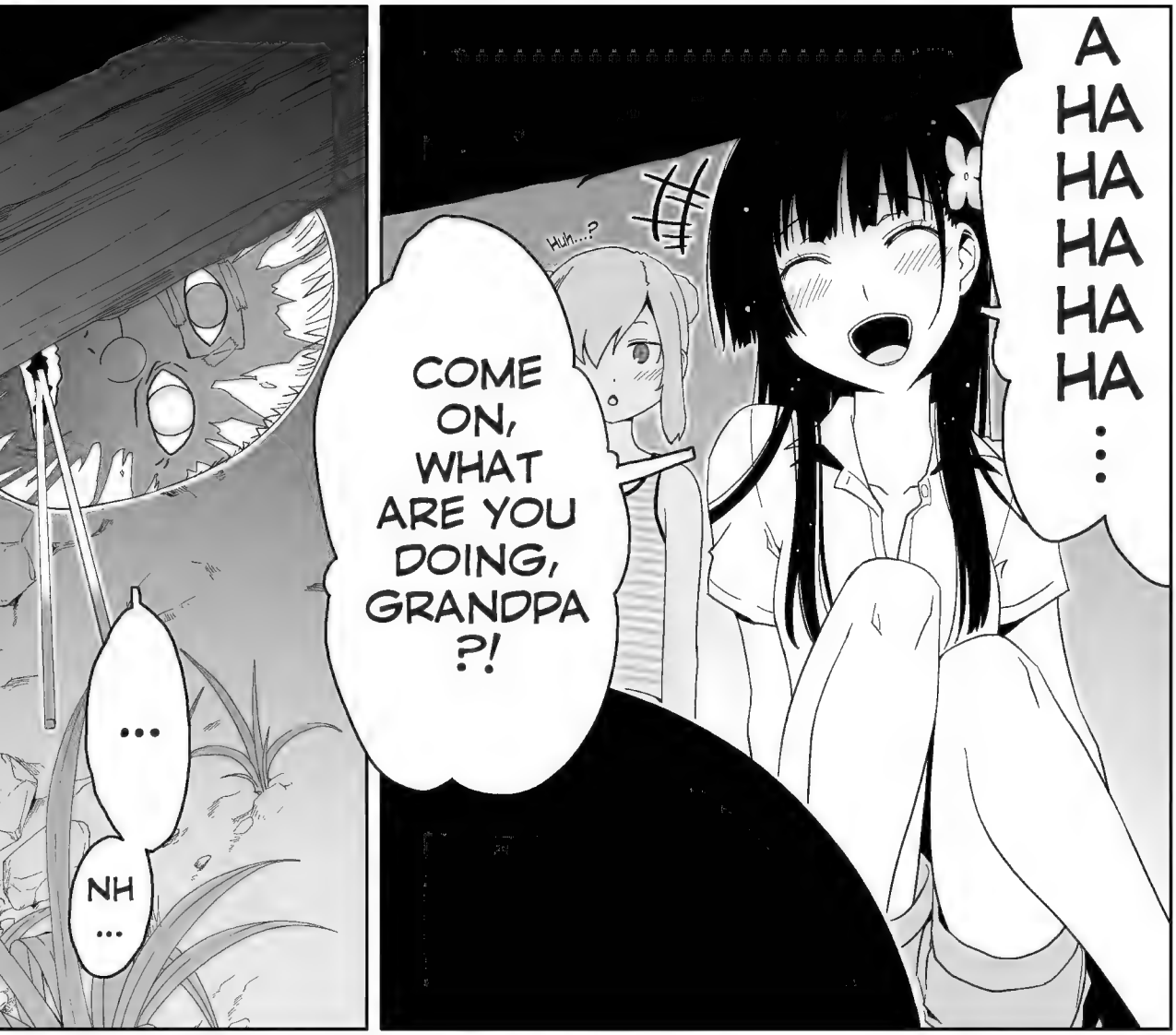

UMM, UMM...
turn
HUH...? OH, THAT'S RIGHT.

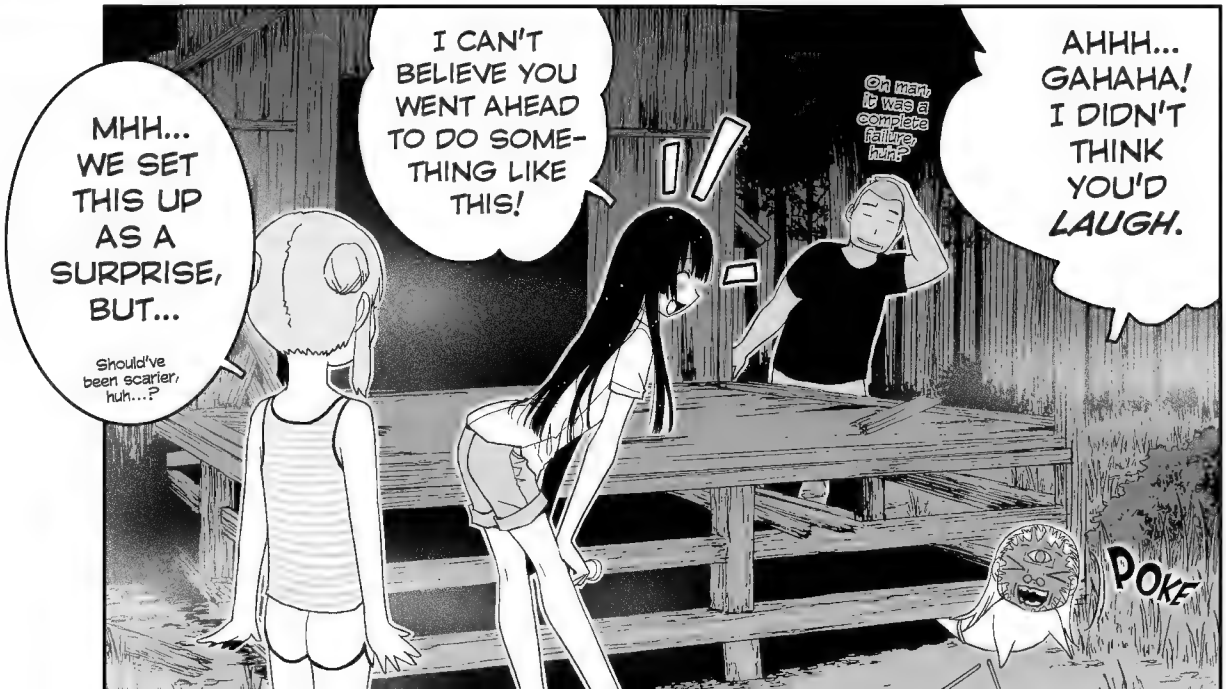

NHH.
HOOOT
glide...


AH.
IS THAT IT?
HOOOT
HOOOT

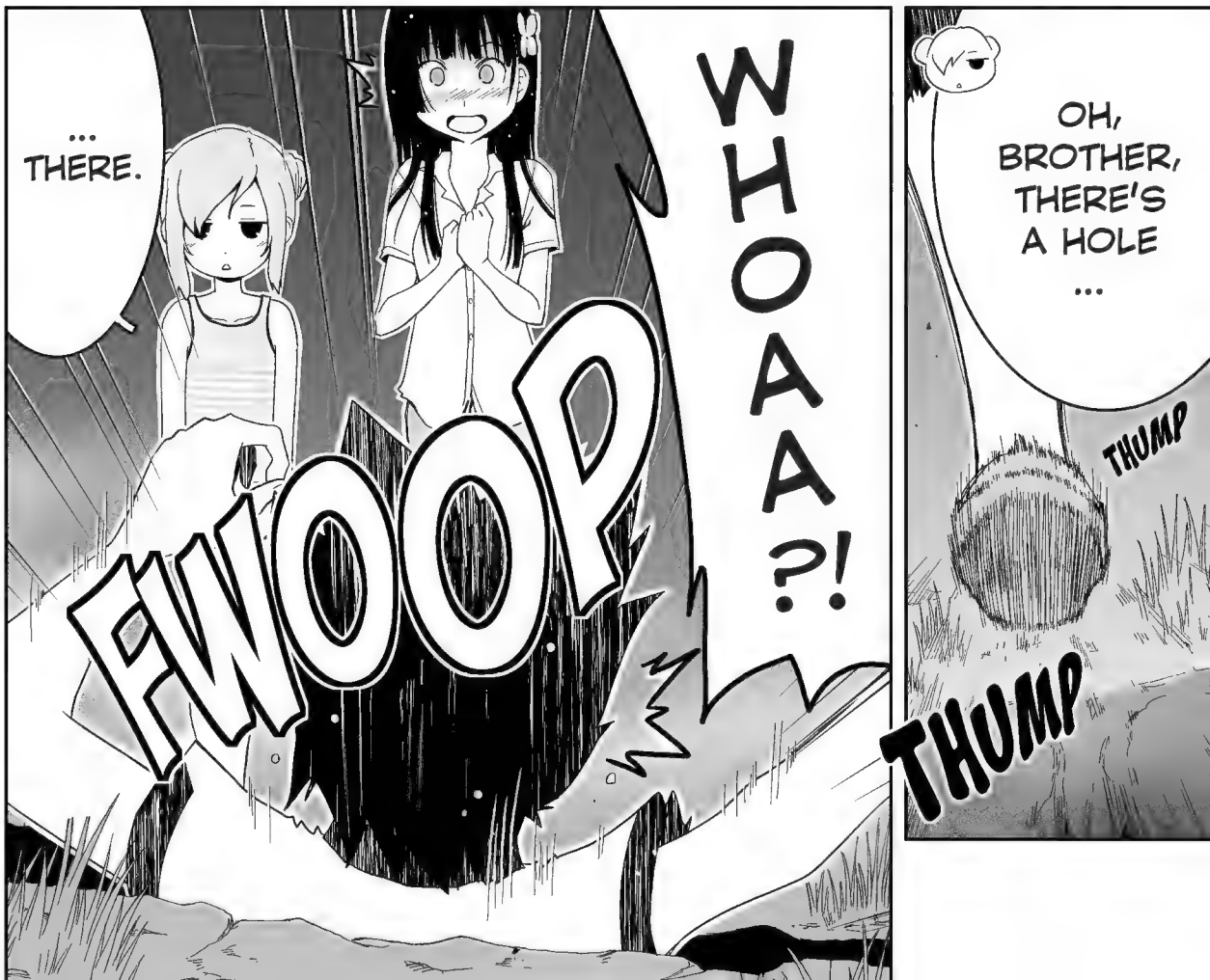


EEEEEEE!!
THAT VOICE ...
REA ?!
SHIVER...
REAAAAA!
DASH
HEY ... WAIT A...!
!


AHAHAHAHAHA...
Huh...?
COME ON, WHAT ARE YOU DOING, GRANDPA?!
...
NH...


AHHH... GAHAHA! I DIDN'T THINK YOU'D LAUGH.
Oh man, it was a complete failure, huh?
I CAN'T BELIEVE YOU WENT AHEAD TO DO SOMETHING LIKE THIS!
MHH... WE SET THIS UP AS A SURPRISE, BUT...
Should've been scarier, huh...?
POKE

HUH... FU-RUYA-KUN ...?!
THUMP
THUMP
THUMP
WHAT'S WRONG?
ARE YOU OKAY?
REAAAA!


... THERE.
FWOOP
WHOAA?!
OH, BROTHER, THERE'S A HOLE ...
THUMP
THUMP

FU-
RUYA-
KUN
!!
GRIP
WHOA!
SLIP
EEEK!
WAAHH!
SKKRRRRR

Somehow, we're fine.
OH, GOOD.
HEY, ARE YOU OKAY?
REA... ARE YOU OKAY...?
YEAH... I THINK SO...
J-JUST WAIT A WHILE. WE'LL GO GET A ROPE FROM THE LODGE.
PLEASE HURRY.
OW...
IT'S STRANGELY COLD HERE, ACTUALLY.
OW...
UMM, LIGHT... THE LIGHT...
SKRPP
CLMPP
HERE IT IS.

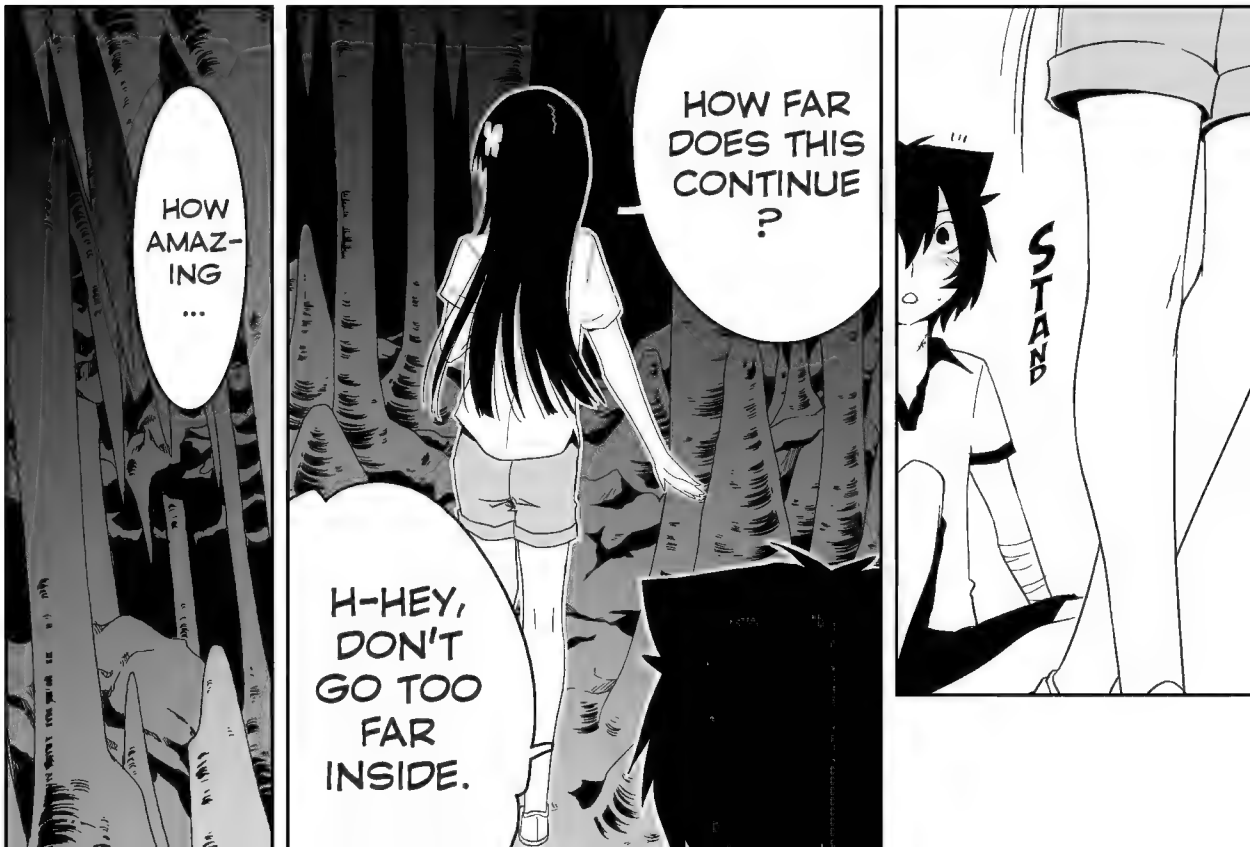
CLICK
AHH...
WHOOSH
WHOOPS!

VOOOOO...

THIS IS...

WOW, THE WHOLE SURFACE IS COVERED IN PILLARS OF ICE...

An ice cave is:
A cave where pillars of ice have built up over many years, with an extremely low temperature. Around Mt. Fuji, there are quite a few wind and ice caves like this one.



twirl
twirl
HEEHEE, WE FOUND A GREAT PLACE, ALL THANKS TO YOU, FURUYA-KUN.
...
IT LOOKS JUST LIKE AN ICE CASTLE ...
... FROM A FAIRY TALE ...
BUT ...
...IT'S TRUE THAT THIS REALLY IS A NATURAL COLD STORAGE ROOM...

IF SHE SPENDS THE SUMMER HERE, SHE CAN KEEP THE DECAY OF HER BODY TO A MINIMUM...!!
STILL ...
...HOW LONG WILL HER *MIND* LAST...?
HEY ...
FU-RUYA-KUN.
HM?
THE... WORDS YOU SAID TO ME...
... BACK THEN ...
BA-BUMP

NH ... HUH?
WHEN... I ARRIVED AT THE HOTEL ALONE, THIS IS WHAT I THOUGHT.
I THOUGHT, IT WAS TRULY GREAT THAT I HAD BECOME A ZOMBIE...
I WONDERED IF I COULD STILL STAY, EVEN THOUGH I HAD TROUBLED SO MANY PEOPLE...
EVEN THOUGH IT WAS JUST A FEW DAYS, I WAS ABLE TO EXPERIENCE BEING A NORMAL GIRL LIKE I NEVER HAD IN MY LIFE BEFORE.
THAT'S WHY... I THOUGHT IT WAS GOOD ENOUGH...
I THOUGHT, EVEN IF I CAN'T LIVE ANYMORE, I HAVE NO REGRETS...
THAT'S WHAT I WAS TRYING TO TELL YOU...

"I KNOW I'M BOTHERING EVERYONE, BUT..."
BUT... WHEN I HEARD YOUR WORDS, FURUYA-KUN...
...I THOUGHT, "I WANT TO STAY LONGER..."
"JUST A LITTLE LON-GER..."
"EVEN SO, A LITTLE LON-GER..."

OH... I THOUGHT THAT GOD HAD HEARD MY WISH...
RUB...
...AND THEN MY STOMACH CALMED DOWN AND MY SENSES RETURNED...
...A SELFISH PERSON, AREN'T I?
twirl
HEH, I REALLY AM...
...REA.

DON'T SAY JUST A LITTLE...
SQUEEEZE
YOU... CAN STAY HERE FOREVER ...
BUMP
BA-BUMP

I'LL PROVE TO YOU...
...THAT I CAN DO SOME-THING TO HELP YOU... SO...
BA-BUMP
...BUMP
... WHA ?
YOU CAN'T... FU-RUYA-KUN...
IF YOU SAY THOSE KINDS OF THINGS TO ME... MY STOMACH WILL... START GOING AGAIN...
I'LL TRY TO EAT YOU, FU-RUYA-KUN...
THUD
FWOOOP
AH, HEY !
NO WAY !

I MEAN, ACTUALLY, YOUR SENSES ALREADY RETURNED ONCE, DIDN'T THEY?!
BUT... I HEARD FROM DARIN-CHAN...
YOU ALREADY RECOVERED FROM THAT TURBID PERIOD OR WHATEVER, DIDN'T YOU?!

S-SO, PLEASE DON'T SAY THINGS LIKE THAT FROM NOW ON.
THAT'S NOT TRUE, I'M TELLING YOU.

WHAT DARIN IS TELLING YOU APPLIES TO ZOMBIES MADE WITH *HER* ELIXIR, RIGHT?!

YOU CAME BACK TO LIFE WITH *MY* ELIXIR, SO YOU'RE DIFFER-ENT...!!

BAM
REA
...
...YOU'RE A ZOMBIE THAT I MADE!!
I'M ...
...A ZOMBIE THAT YOU MADE...?

STARE
THAT SOUNDS... PRETTY COOL, DOESN'T IT...?

W-WHY ARE YOU LAUGHING ?!
IT'S JUST... THAT REACTION IS SO YOU...
W-WHAT DO YOU MEAN BY THAT ?!
I ALSO THINK ...

HAH!

HUH ...?
AHAHAHAHA!
AHA-HAHA-HA, WHAT ?

THAT TIME... REA CAME BACK...
?
?
?
...BECAUSE GOD HEARD OUR WISHES...
...BECAUSE IT WAS STILL OKAY FOR US TO BE TOGETHER.
A HA HA
HA HA
GAHHH!
A ghost!
POOF
OH, ARE YOU ALL RIGHT?

SANKAREA ANECDOTES 5

About Mero

This time around is about the changes in Mero's character. In reality… before publication, in the rather early steps, the setting actually had Mero as Chihiro's *older sister!* Or rather, not only her age but also her personality and her appearance were different, so she was a completely different character…

Afterwards, when I decided to make Ranko the cousin character, in order to balance it out, Mero was changed into a younger sister character. If publication had started with this version, I wonder what kind of answers big sister Mero would have given in "Mero's Zen Riddles"…?

By the way, I've drawn a convenience store or whatever below, but in the very beginning, the Furuya family was supposed to run a convenience store, not a temple. (I just remembered this.)

FURUYA MERO (25)
Ngh, ya jerk…
Chihiro's older sister. A "moe"-less older sister character. She sometimes helps out with her family's convenience store. Has NEET tendencies.
Mostly just stays in underwear on the bottom.
Older sister just wears one layer of underwear when dealing with customers in the convenience store too.
DINGDONG
1000 yen plea-aase.
Ohh, welcome home.
OLDER SISTER
CHI-HIRO
WOOSH
OLDER SISTER
STEP
Change properly and do your job.
Customers can't see it.
CHI-HI-RO
STEP
Wearing a largish convenience store uniform.
Your change is 260 yeeennn.

23 MY... FEELINGS... TOO...

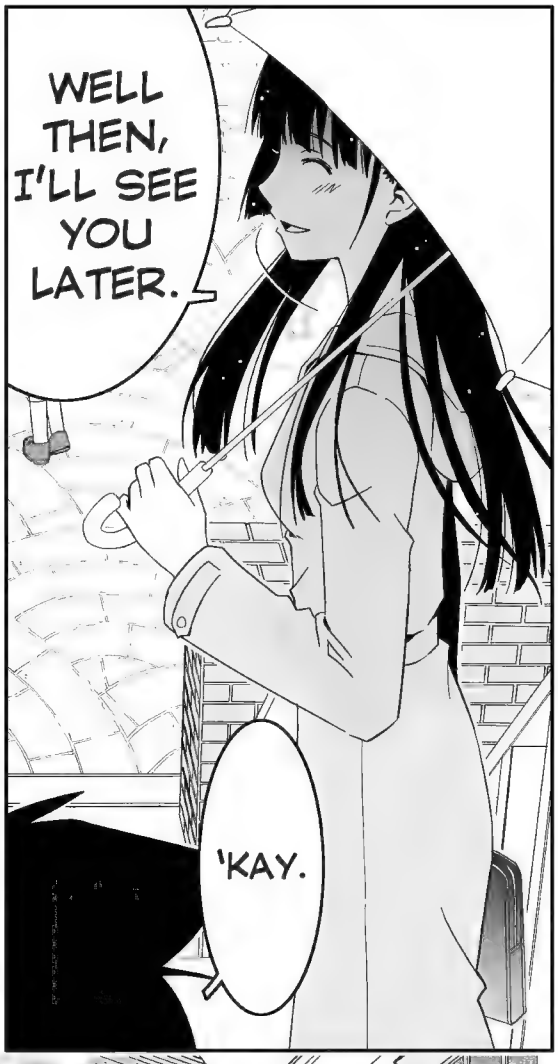
✦ ✦ ZOMBIE STRIPPERS ✦ ✦

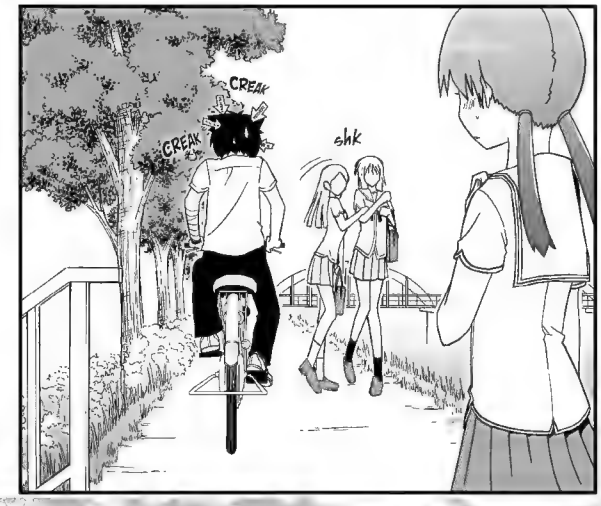
OKAY.
SEE YOU LATER.
TODAY'S HOT, TOO, SO STAY IN THE SCHOOL BUILDING AS MUCH AS YOU CAN.
chatter
chatter
I'LL BE CAREFUL, OF COURSE!
GOOD MORNING, CHAIR-WOMAN.
OH MY, WHAT ARE YOU WEAR-ING ?!

BARK
BARK
WHAT IS THAT CHEAP-LOOKING HEAD-BAND ?!
ARE YOU TRYING TO APPEAL TO BOYS?! TAKE IT OFF, LEST YOU MAKE ALL SANKA GIRLS' STUDENTS LOOK CHEAP.
UH... OH... YES, I'M SOR-RY.
GIVE ME A BREAK ...
POOFFFF

W-WHAT HAVE YOU COME HERE FOR?
SCREECH
I... I, I, I... I'LL HAVE YOU ARRESTED, YOU PERVERT!!
HUU-HH?!
PER-VERT...
TAP TAP
PERVEEERT!
UH... FURUYA-KUN, DID SOME-THING HAPPEN... WITH MY MOTHER...?
AH... NO, NOTH-ING, NOTH-ING!!
Whisper
Whisper
ANY-WAY, I CAN'T JUST STAND HERE TALKING, SO IT'S ABOUT TIME FOR ME...
OH... THAT'S RIGHT.

THUNK
THUNK
THUNK
THUNK
HEH-HEH
HEHHEH!
Whisper
whisper


WELL THEN, I'LL SEE YOU LATER.
'KAY.


CREAK
CREAK
shk

GOOD MOR-NING.
CLATTER

AWA

Wah!
NYAA-AHH!! REA-SHA-MAAA...
SANKA-SAN... I'M SO GLAD.

...!!
... SA-MA.
IT'S REALLY YOU, REA-SAMA ...!
drip
drop

IT'S TRUE, IT'S TRUE. I THOUGHT YOU HAD BEEN INVOLVED IN SOME KIND OF ACCI-DENT.
babble
babble
babble
I WAS SO SURPRISED WHEN I HEARD YOU DISAP-PEARED.
babble

babble
babble
babble

T... THAT'S RIGHT.

SO THAT'S WHAT THEY WERE TOLD...

I HEARD THAT THERE JUST HAPPENED TO BE A LIGHTNING BOLT THAT CAUSED A FIRE AND BECAUSE OF THAT YOU WERE FOUND BY FIRE-FIGHTERS. I'M REALLY GLAD.

ACTUALLY, THEY SAY YOU WERE JUST EXPLORING SOME RUINS AND FELL INTO AN OLD WELL, AND GOT TRAPPED ?

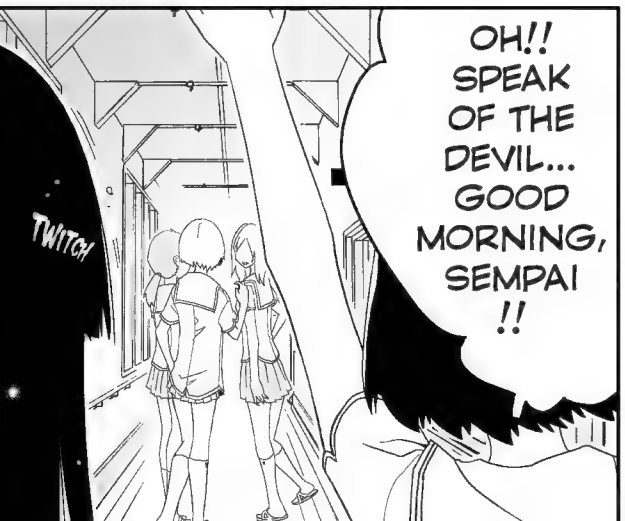
I'M SURPRISED THAT YOU'RE INTERESTED IN THAT KIND OF STUFF, SANKA-SAN.

chatter

IT SEEMS LIKE EVERYONE KNOWS ABOUT ME, BUT WHO DID YOU ALL HEAR IT FROM?

OHH, FROM RANKO-SEM-PAI.

chatter

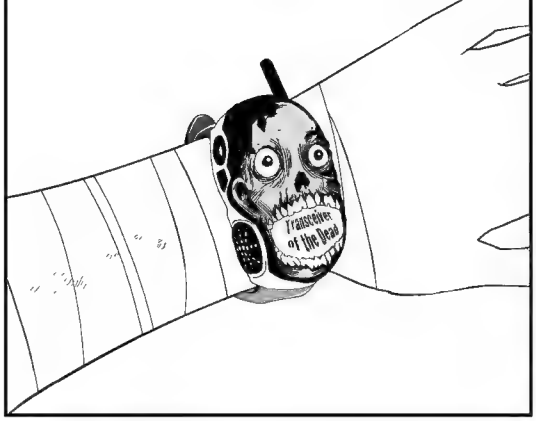


OH!! SPEAK OF THE DEVIL... GOOD MORNING, SEMPAI !!

N-NOD
HUH? SEMPAI, YOU'RE CHANGING CLASSROOMS FROM FIRST PERIOD TOO?
OHHH, GOOD MORNING, BOTH OF YOU.
THAT'S RIGHT, FOR ALMOST THE NEXT TWO AND A HALF HOURS I HAVE NOH APPRECIA-TION.
It's a required subject for second-year students.
WE HAD IT TWO WEEKS AGO, BUT NGH, I DON'T UNDERSTAND IT AT ALL.
HUH? AH... YES, TO SOME EXTENT...
DO YOU GET IT, REA-CHAN? NOH AND ALL THAT.

SQUEEZE
slide...
WHAT A WELL-BRED YOUNG LAAADY!
UM... WANKO-SAN.
THANK YOU FOR EXPLAIN-ING TO EVERY-ONE...
...ABOUT THE OTHER DAY.
NNNHH
OH YEAH, I DID WANT TO GO TO THAT BARBEQUE, AFTER ALL.
OH, WELL THEN NEXT TIME LET'S GO TOGETH-ER, FOR SURE!!
tee hee
THAT WOULD DEFI-NITE-LY...
...BE MORE FUN FOR FURUYA-KUN, AS WELL.
HM...

WELL THEN, SEE YOU LATER. SAY HI TO CHI-HIRO.
SIGH...
...I'M GLAD.
RANKO, YOU'LL BE LATE.
OH, SOR-RY!
YOU WENT TO A BARBE-QUE? HOW NICE.
... I'M GLAD.
I KIND OF THOUGHT THAT WANKO-SAN MIGHT BE A LITTLE MAD AT ME...
...BUT I GUESS I WAS OVER-THINKING IT...
BONK


Transceiver of the Dead

GRAB
1-5
Sakamoto
ALL RIGHT! TWO OUTS.

"IT'S YOUR OWN FAULT IF THAT MONSTER ATTACKS YOU AGAIN..."
...

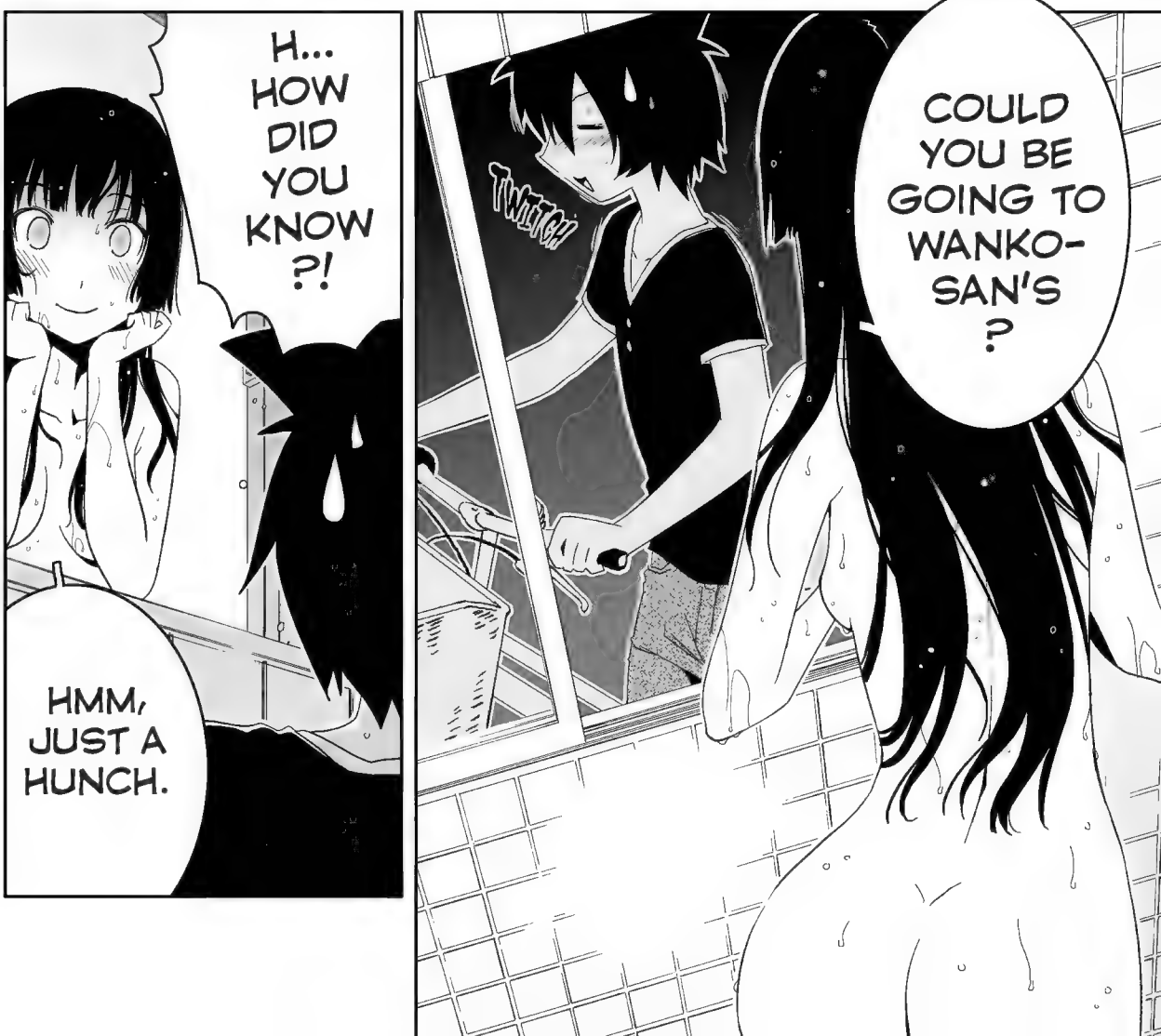
CLANG
STILL, I HAVEN'T FELT LIKE CONTACTING HER MYSELF, EITHER...
It might end up being a pain, after all...

EVER SINCE THAT PHONE CALL, WANKO HASN'T SAID ANYTHING TO ME.
One hit and it's bye-bye.
Hit it, Yasutaka!
One more out!
Chatter
Chatter

THEN AGAIN ...
BWAAM
THAT'S THE GAME!
WAAAHH
NICE, FURUYA!
HN?
YOU DID IT!
HEE HEE ...
DURING THE BARBEQUE BEFORE...
PLOOP
rub
rub
WE FOUND THIS AMAZING PLACE.

BY THE WAY, BUB-CHAN, I WONDER WHAT YOU COULD BE DOING. SOMETIMES YOU SUDDENLY DISAPPEAR FOR A WHILE...
MEOWW
THERE WAS THIS CAVE THAT DEVELOPED UNDER-GROUND, AND THERE WAS ICE ALL AROUND US.
hummm
hummm
I WISH I COULD HAVE SHOWN YOU TOO, BUB-CHAN.
PLOOP
AH.
HOP
I SEE, YOU'VE GOT A FRIEND.
MEOWW
THUP

HMM...
CLANG
HUH?
FURUYA-KUN, ARE YOU GOING OUT NOW?
AH... YEAH...
CL-CL-CLACK


H... HOW DID YOU KNOW?!
HMM, JUST A HUNCH.
TWITCH!
COULD YOU BE GOING TO WANKO-SAN'S?

I SPOKE TO WANKO-SAN TODAY AT SCHOOL TOO.
SHE WAS DISAP-POINTED SHE COULDN'T GO TO THE BARBEQUE ...
...
SO I'D LIKE TO GO WITH HER NEXT TIME.

WIGGLE
WIGGLE
WIGGLE
WIGGLE
NH...
AH...
COME...ON...
NH...H.
YOU REALLY NEVER GET ANY BETTER, DO YOU?
NHH, COME ONN-NN...
SCRAPE
SCRAPE
NH...
TREMBLE
TR-REMBLE

S... SHUT UP...
SIGHHH
I THOUGHT IF I SENT YOU TO SANKA GIRLS' YOU'D GET BETTER AT HOUSEHOLD STUFF...
Ranko's mom
Saohji Kaoru
NO WAY THAT COULD HAPPEN!! I'M YOUR KID, AFTER ALL.
MHH?! WHAT DO YOU MEAN ?!
SKREE
They're at it again ...
JUST WHAT I SAID.
WHAT WAS THAT, YOU DELIN-QUENT ...?
GRRRRR
JUST WHO DO YOU THINK IS FEEDING YOU ...?!
BARK
BARK
BARK
Patience.
THAT WOULD BE DAD.
WHAT, WHY YOU ...
Ranko's dad
Saohji Yasuki
RANKO-CHAN, YOU HAVE A VISITOR.

NH.
rustle

GOOD EVEN-ING !!!
PEEK
CHIHIRO-CHAN, IT'S BEEN SO LONG SINCE YOU CAME TO VISIT. RANKO'S ROOM IS AS FILTHY AS ALWAYS, BUT PLEASE COME IN.
S-SURE ...
HOLD ON!
I KNOW I ALWAYS SAY THIS, BUT COUSINS CAN MARRY EACH OTHER, YOU KNOW.
...YOU COULD EVEN GET A PREGNANT ENDING, TOO!
whisper
whisper
Uh...
SHUT UUUP!
WHAM

F...
F
F
F
PWAHH
GUAHH
OH MY ...
NNHA ... AAH-HHH.
SPLATT
CRACK
NOO ...
CRACK
SPLOT
SPLUSH
GNHHAAA
RIPP

CLACK
WHIINE
99 DAYS LATER
THE END
PLAPP
OH MY
SPLUSH
EEEKK
CLACK
WHIINE
END...
BAMM
...
SWSHHHH
UWEEMM
THUD

EVEN THOUGH IT WAS NORMAL FOR US TO DO THIS UP UNTIL A MONTH AGO...
...
IT REALLY... HAS BEEN A LONG TIME SINCE WE'VE WATCHED DVDS TOGETHER.
HEY, ABOUT THAT TIME...
THUD
CLUSHING
I ALREADY SAID IT.
STAND
W-WHAT'S THAT? IT'S NOT LIKE YOU ...
IF YOU HAVE SOMETHING YOU WANT TO SAY, JUST SAY IT!!

WERE ...
... THOSE YOUR... REAL FEEL-INGS ?
YOU ...
WHY WOULD YOU...
CAN'T YOU THINK ABOUT HOW REA FEELS ?!
...I KNOW.

I KNOW I SAID HORRIBLE THINGS ...
I WAS IN AN AWFUL MOOD AT THE TIME ...
BUT ...

BUT IF I HADN'T SAID IT... YOU WOULD NEVER HAVE REALIZED IT, RIGHT ...?!
NNHHAAAA
FOR A WHILE NOW YOU'VE KEPT GETTING MORE AND MORE INJURED... AT THIS RATE, YOU REALLY WILL BE TORN APART EVENTUALLY.
HEH. THIS IS NOTH-ING ...

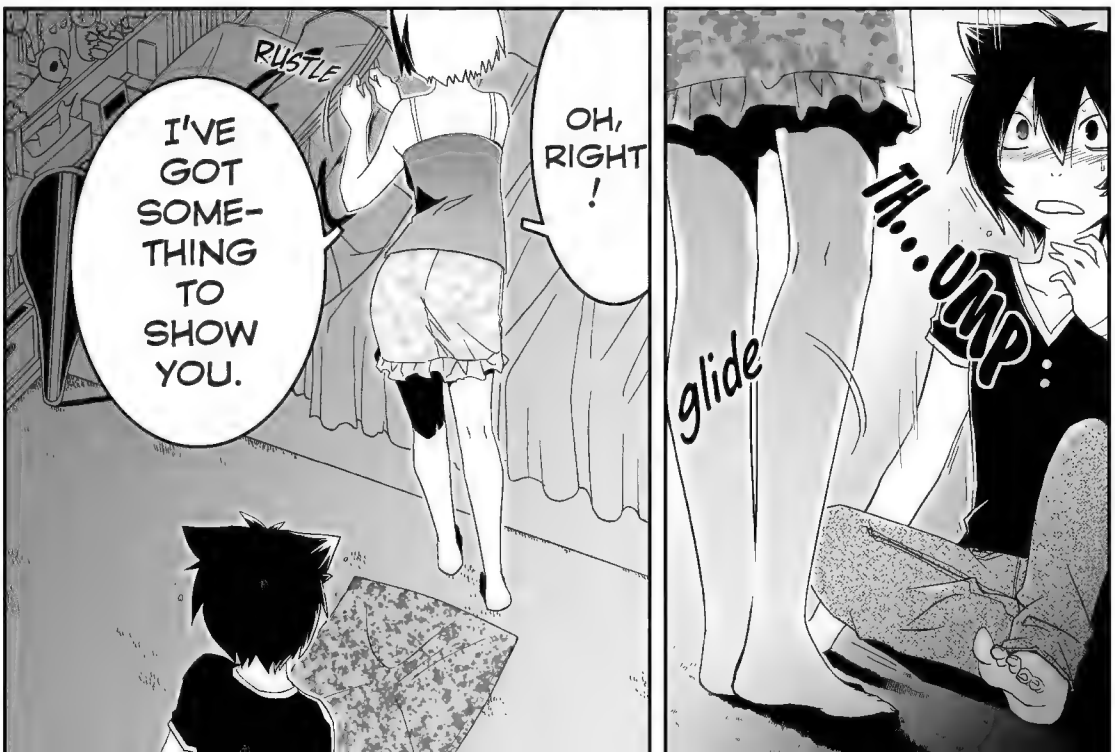
I... CAN'T STAND IT!!!
I'VE PUT UP WITH IT UNTIL NOW... BUT...
NO MORE ...
plip
I CAN'T LOOK ON WHILE YOU GET HURT...
NOT ANY-MORE, CHIHI-RO...

GRIP...
PLEASE THINK OF...
... MY... FEEL-INGS TOO ...
TUG
HUH ...?

CLICK CLICK
WHY WON'T THEY DIE?!
SKR SKR
BAMM
DAMMIT!
WHAT ARE THESE BAS-TARDS?
WHAM
DON'T COME CLOSER ... STOP IT...!
NGA-AAA-HH!
GWAA

SQUOSH
SYAAAAAHHHHH
WHOAA
ZWUSHH

...
WAN...
KO...


glide
TH...UMP!
OH, RIGHT!
RUSTLE
I'VE GOT SOME-THING TO SHOW YOU.

THAT GIRL NAMED DARIN'S STAYING WITH YOU, RIGHT ...?
SHE SAID SHE CAME HERE TO RESEARCH ZOMBIES ...
ACTUALLY, WHEN I WAS IN HER ROOM RECENTLY, I FOUND THIS.
?!
slide...

ZOMBIE POTION
WARNING
ZoMA
HUH ...?
CLACK
H-HEY, THAT'S ...
NO WAY...
IF...

CLOP
...I WERE TO BECOME A ZOMBIE...
CHIHIRO... WOULD YOU... LOVE... ME...?
HEY!
WAIT!
WANKO!!

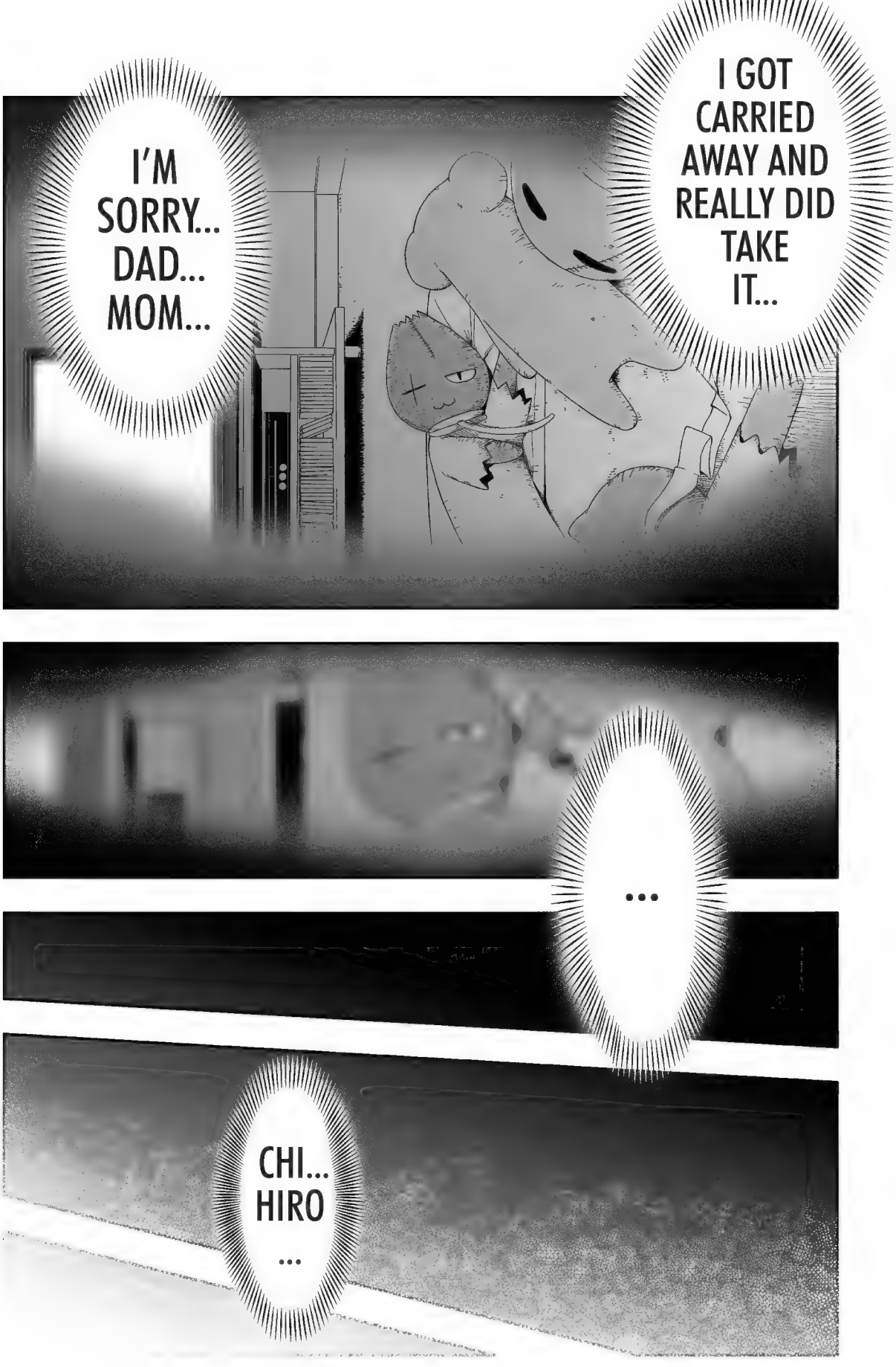
24
EVEN...
UNREQUITED LOVE...
BIO ZOMBIE

THUNK
THAT MEDI-CINE... NO, IT CAN'T BE...
DOOOOOOOOOMMM
IF... I WERE TO BECOME A ZOMBIE ...
... WOULD YOU... LOVE... ME... ?

GRAB
SPIT IT OUT!
DRP
DRP
WAN-KO ...
SKR
SKR
SHAKE
WHAT ARE YOU THINK-ING?!
BE-COM-ING A ZOM-BIE...
... MEANS *DYING*, YOU KNOW!
I... KNOW ...
SHAKE

WITH THIS ...
THUMP
...NEXT TIME... I WAKE UP...
... I'LL BE ONE TOO ...

SLUMP
WANKO !! ...!! HEY!!
WAKE UP!! WANKO-OO!!
...AH.


I'M SORRY... DAD... MOM...
I GOT CARRIED AWAY AND REALLY DID TAKE IT...
...
CHI... HIRO ...

THIS LOOKS JUST LIKE YOU.
DOES TOO! THESE EYES, FOR EXAM-PLE.
THE MOUTH LOOKS LIKE YOU.
DOES NOT.
DOES NOT.
ROLL
VOOMM
THIS HANGED JOHN FROM THE ZOMBIE BOY SERIES LOOKS JUST LIKE YOUR FACE, CHIHIRO.
NO, IT DOESN'T.
Chihiro, 11 years old
Wanko, 12 years old
HUH? AREN'T YOU LOOKING FORWARD TO MIDDLE SCHOOL?
SIGH... IN THE SPRING I'LL BE A MIDDLE SCHOOL STUDENT, TOO...
URK- IT- DOES!
SQUEE SQUEE

I'LL HAVE TO WALK TO SCHOOL IN THE OPPOSITE DIRECTION FROM THE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL.
SO ON THE WAY TO AND FROM SCHOOL I WON'T BE WITH YOU, CHIHIRO.
?
HN? OH, THAT'S RIGHT.

I AM, A LOT ...
I AM, BUT STILL ...

CLASSES WILL BE LONGER, AND I HAVE AFTER-SCHOOL ACTIVITIES TOO...
HUH? YOU'RE GOING INTO THE TENNIS CLUB, RIGHT?

OWWW, WHA... WHAT THE HELL ?!!
fwish
IT'S NOTH-ING ...

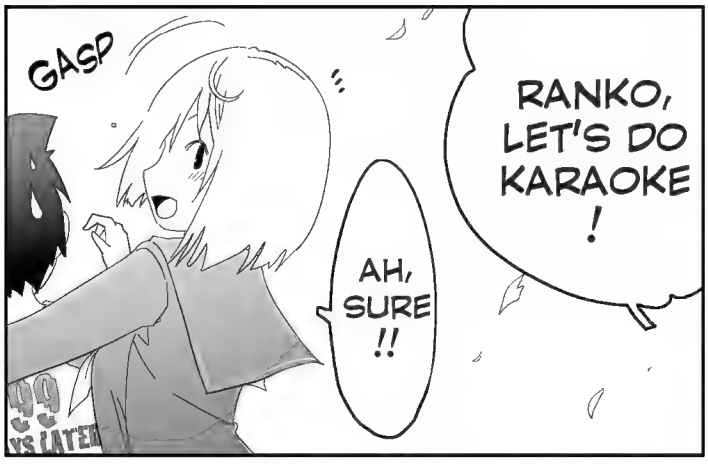
BWOHH

WELL, WHAT'S THE PROB-LEM?

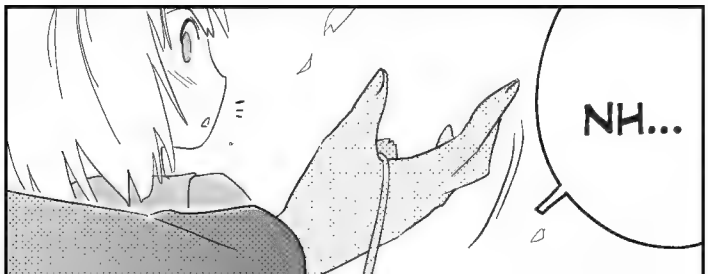
DUMB-
ASS.
OH!
30th
Entrance
Ceremony
Shiyoh
Public
Middle
School

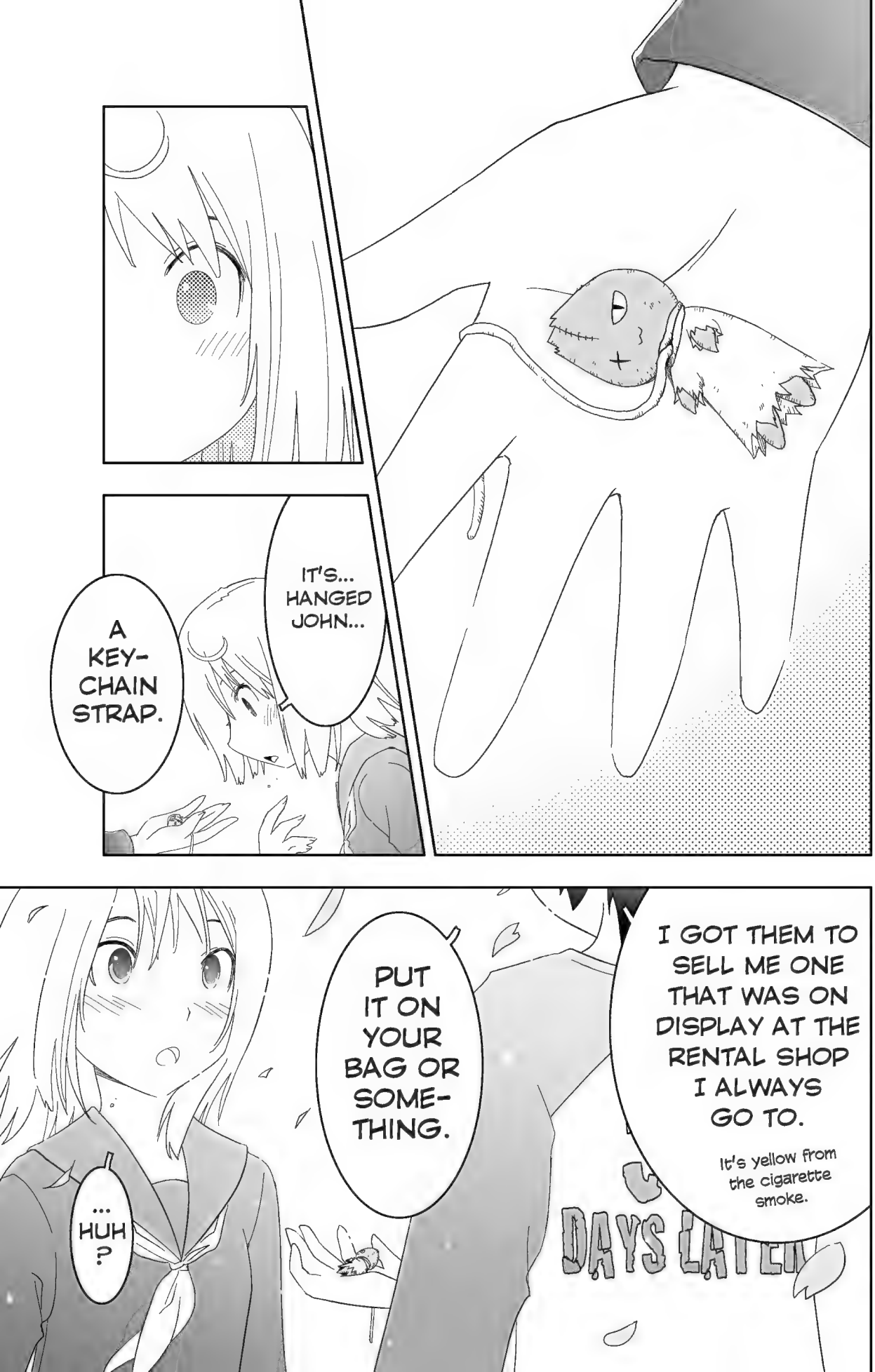
HEE-HEE, LOOKS GOOD, HUH?!
My uniform...
AHH, WHAT GOOD WEA-THER ...
TADA!
poof

CHIHIRO... WHAT IS IT? YOU CAME FOR ME ...?
TAP
IT'S ON MY WAY HOME FROM DROPPING BY THE DVD RENTAL STORE.
TAP

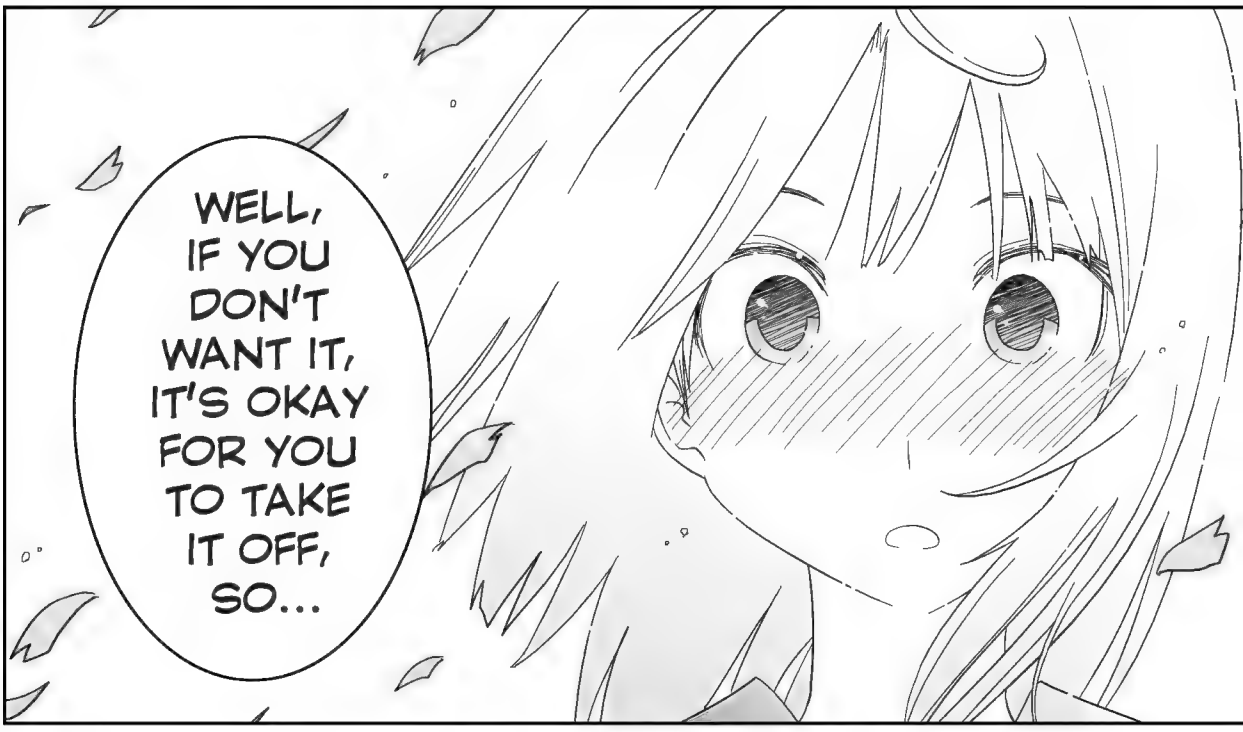

GASP
RANKO, LET'S DO KARAOKE !
AH, SURE !!

RUB RUB
IKH- IT LOOKS GOOD ...

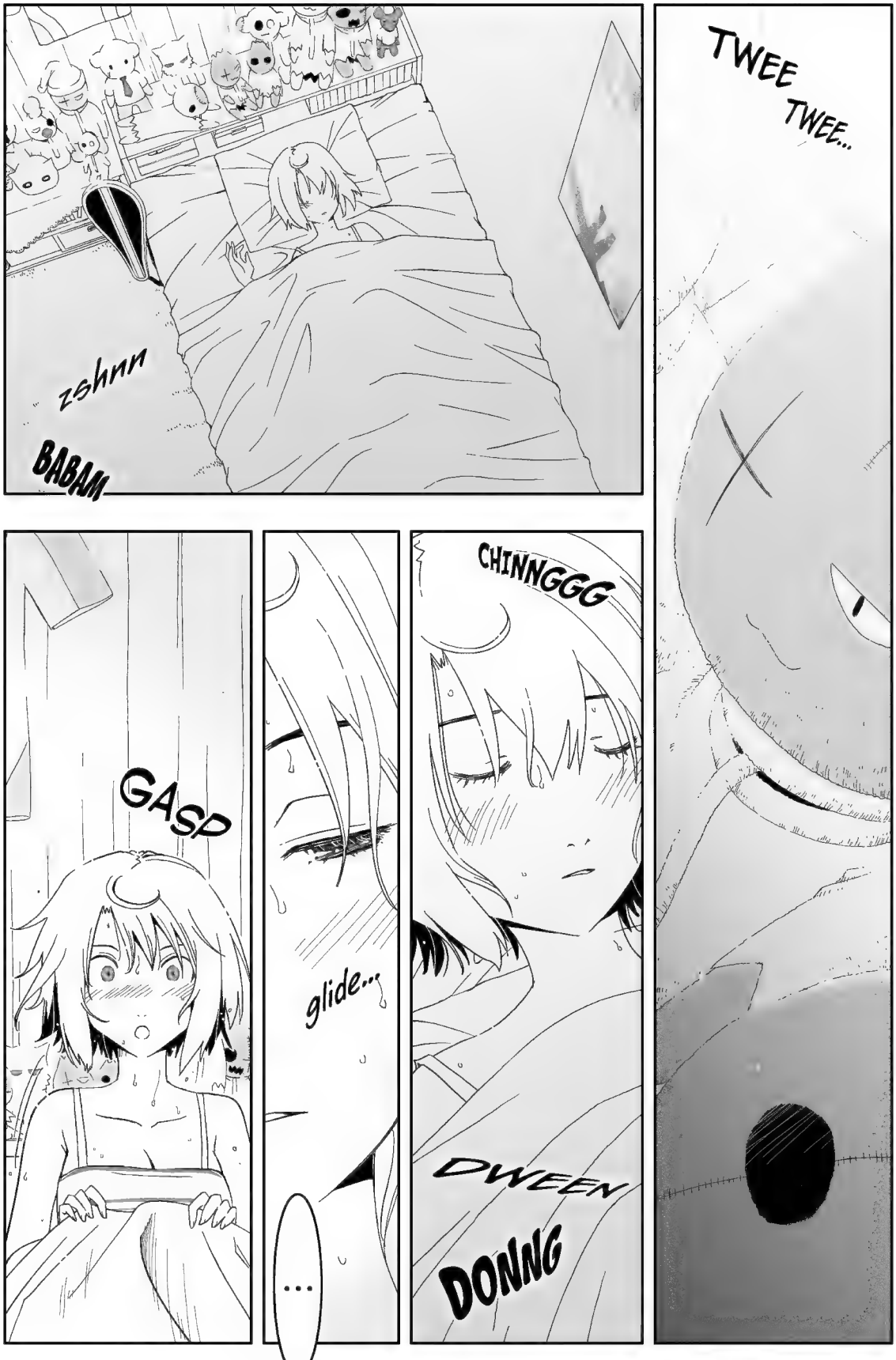

NH...


IT'S... HANGED JOHN...
A KEY-CHAIN STRAP.
I GOT THEM TO SELL ME ONE THAT WAS ON DISPLAY AT THE RENTAL SHOP I ALWAYS GO TO.
It's yellow from the cigarette smoke.
PUT IT ON YOUR BAG OR SOME-THING.
... HUH?

THAT WAY, FROM NOW ON, EVEN IF OUR PATHS TO SCHOOL ARE DIFFERENT, IT WILL BE LIKE I'M WITH YOU, RIGHT?
OR SOME-THING LIKE THAT.


WELL, IF YOU DON'T WANT IT, IT'S OKAY FOR YOU TO TAKE IT OFF, SO...

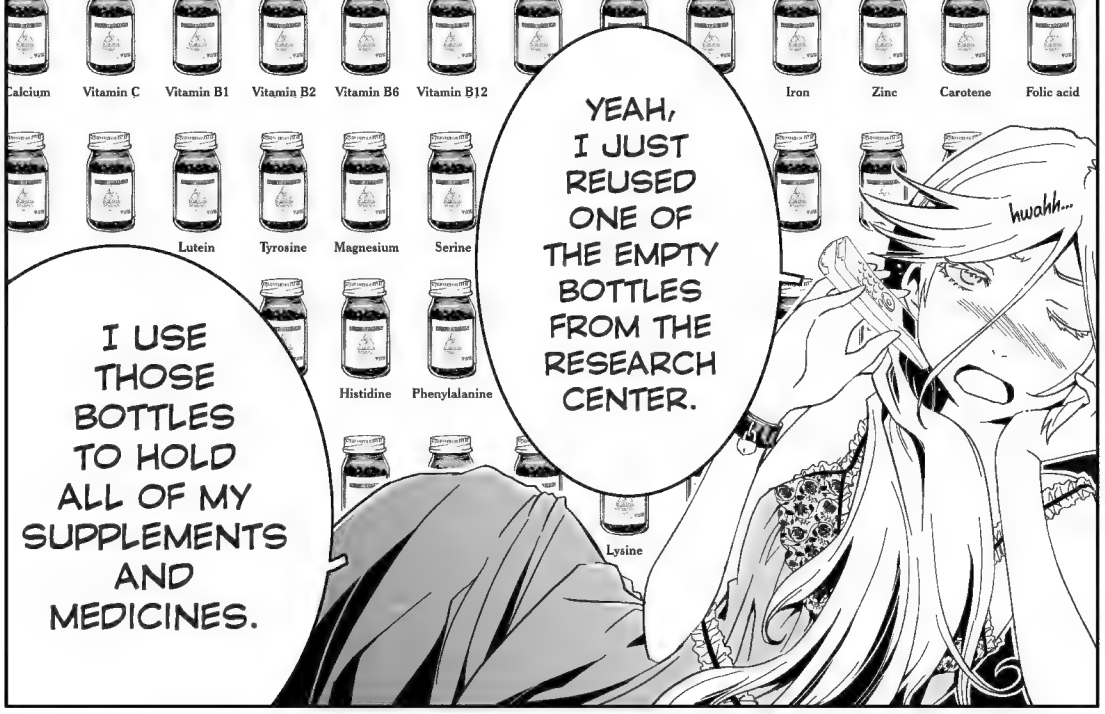
...
OKAY.
CHIHIRO...
THANK
YOU.
THANK
YOU...


zshnn
BABAM
TWEE
TWEE...
GASP
glide...
...
CHINNGGG
DWEEN
DONNG

THUD
THUD
SHNN
TA
DANN
THUD

...NH.
HEY.
GASP
Slide
ZOMBIE POTION
WARNING
I THOUGHT I'D HAVE HER GIVE YOU AN ANTI-DOTE... BUT THEN...
...I CONTACTED DARIN JUST AS SOON AS YOU PASSED OUT.

DIPHEN-HYDRA-MINE HYDRO-CHLO RIDE ...?
HUH... BUT IT SAYS "ZOMBIE POTION" ON THE LABEL ...
I ASKED ABOUT THAT, TOO.
SHE SAID SHE TAKES IT WHEN HER RESEARCH IS GETTING STRESSFUL AND SHE NEEDS HELP GETTING TO SLEEP.
SHE SAID THAT UNLIKE SLEEPING PILLS IT'S GOT NO SIDE EFFECTS OR RISK OF DEPENDENCY ...


Calcium
Vitamin C
Vitamin B1
Vitamin B2
Vitamin B6
Vitamin B12
Iron
Zinc
Carotene
Folic acid
Lutein
Tyrosine
Magnesium
Serine
Histidine
Phenylalanine
Lysine
I USE THOSE BOTTLES TO HOLD ALL OF MY SUPPLEMENTS AND MEDICINES.
YEAH, I JUST REUSED ONE OF THE EMPTY BOTTLES FROM THE RESEARCH CENTER.
hwahh...

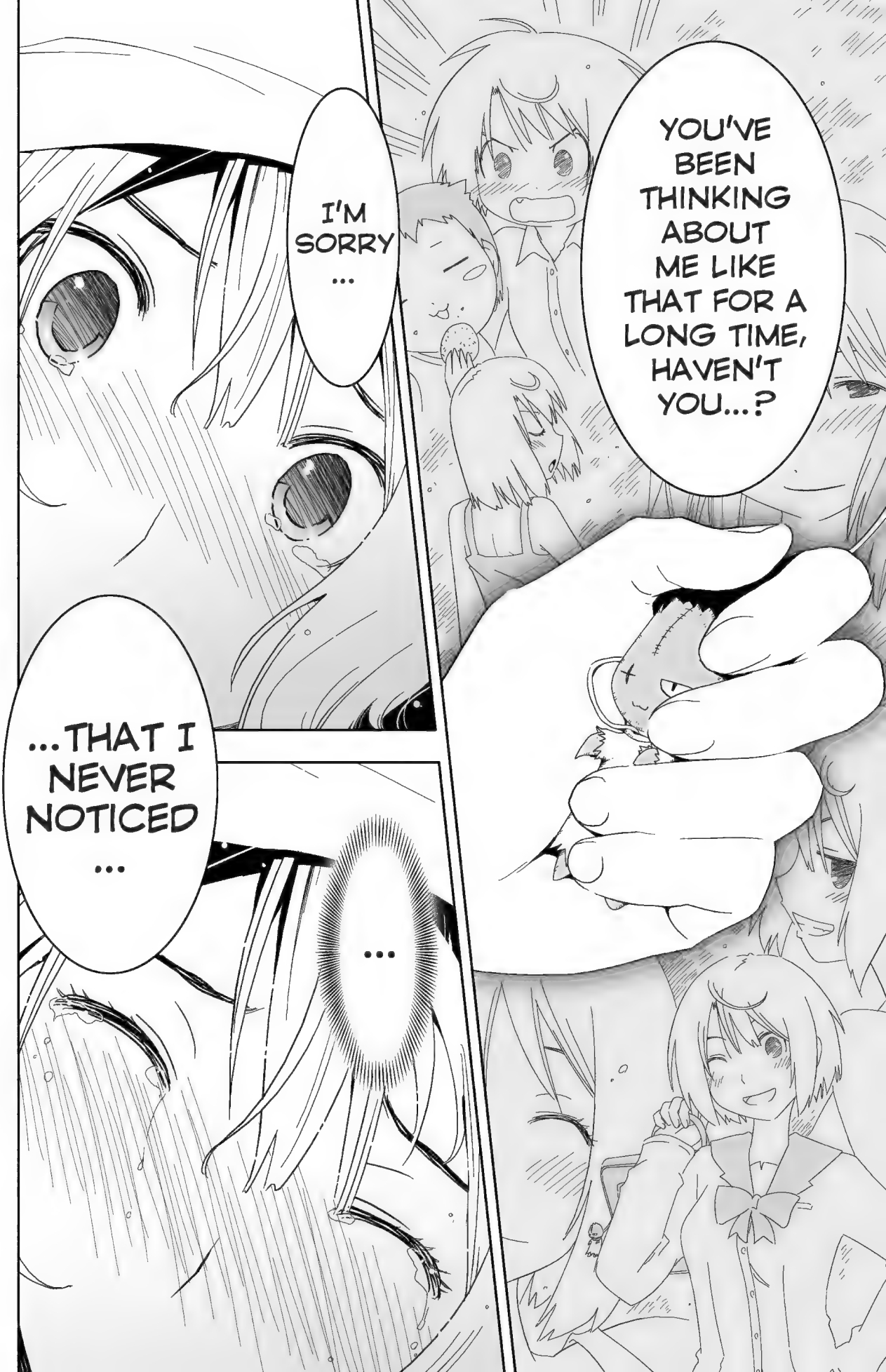
How annoying...
WELL, ANYWAY, YOU WOULDN'T EVEN DIE FROM TAKING A LOT OF THAT STUFF.
I CAN TELL THEM APART FROM THE SHAPE OF THE PILLS, AND AS LONG AS I KNOW, THEN THAT'S ENOUGH!
HUUHH?! THEN YOU WOULDN'T KNOW WHICH ONE IS WHICH, WOULD YOU?!
if all the labels are the same.
SHE SAID.

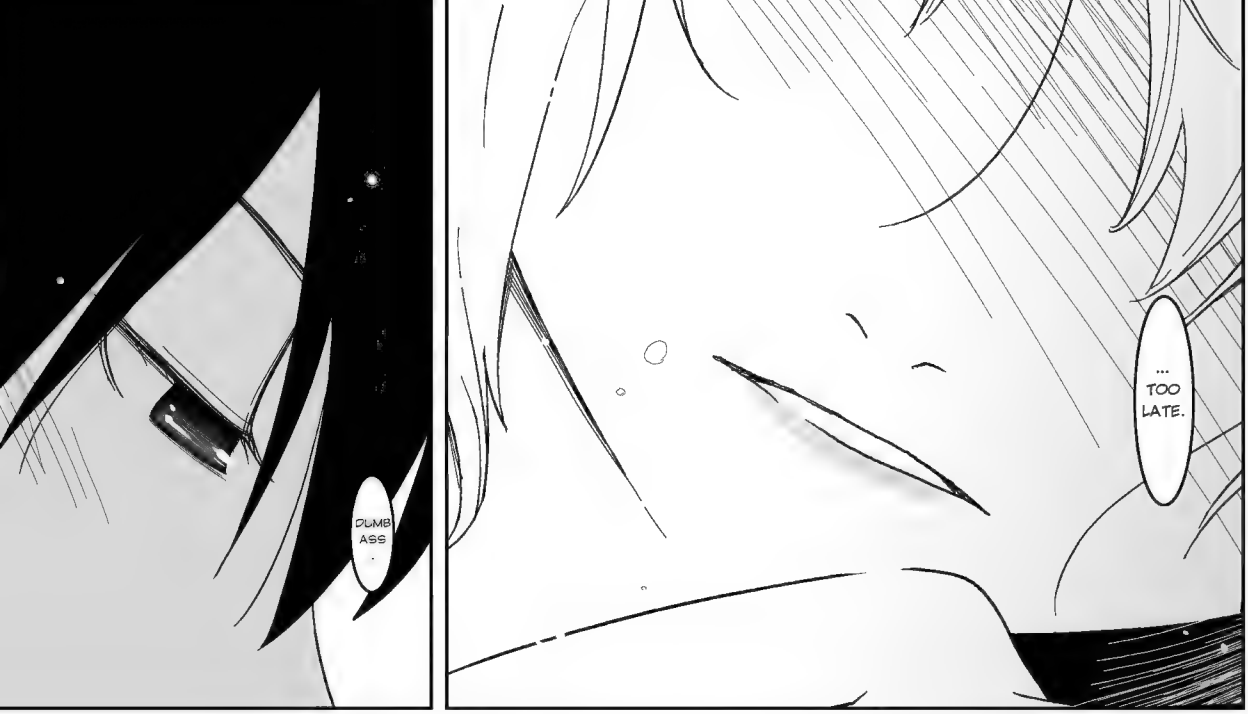
BLUUSHH
YOU ...
WHOOSHH
HEY.
WANKO-SAAA-NN.
GET OUT !!
DON'T SAY ANY-THING, JUST GET OUT ...!!

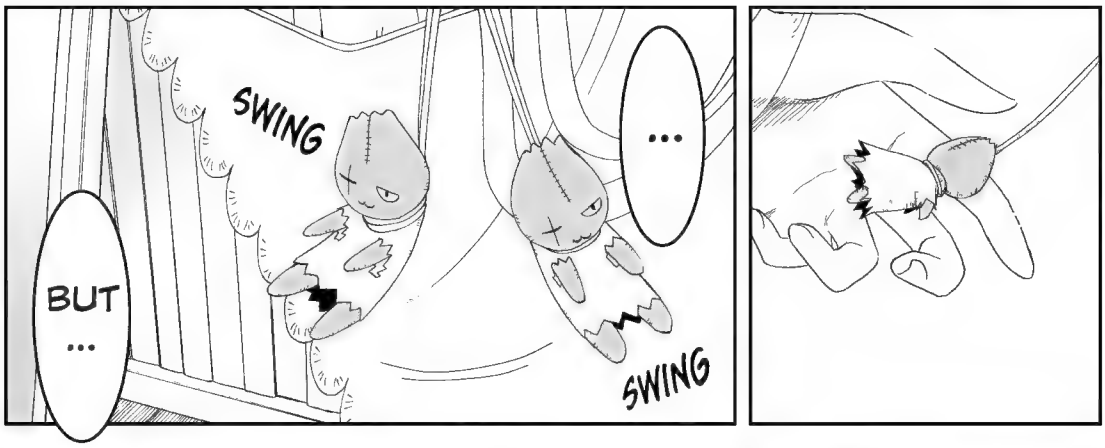
HOW... HUMILIATING ...!!
DUMBASS DUMBASS DUMBASS
... DUMB- AAA- SS !!

DUMBASS...!!
... NHH.
hic
snfff

...
IT'S THE STRAP I GAVE YOU BACK THEN ...
slide...
I WONDERED WHY YOU HAD KEPT IT ON THIS WHOLE TIME EVEN THOUGH IT WAS SO BEAT UP...
I SEE...
...

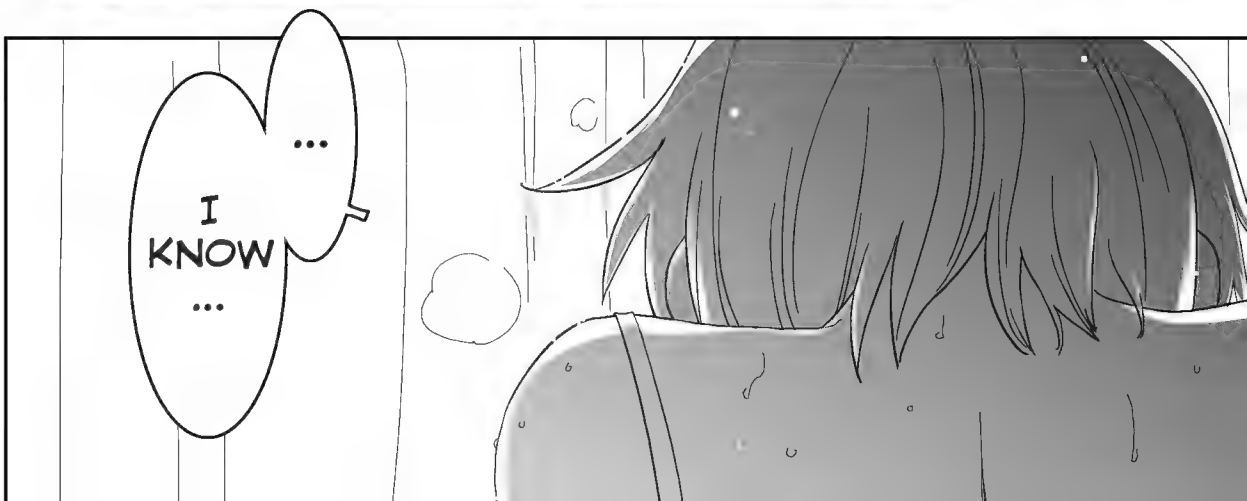

YOU'VE BEEN THINKING ABOUT ME LIKE THAT FOR A LONG TIME, HAVEN'T YOU...?
I'M SORRY ...
...
...THAT I NEVER NOTICED ...

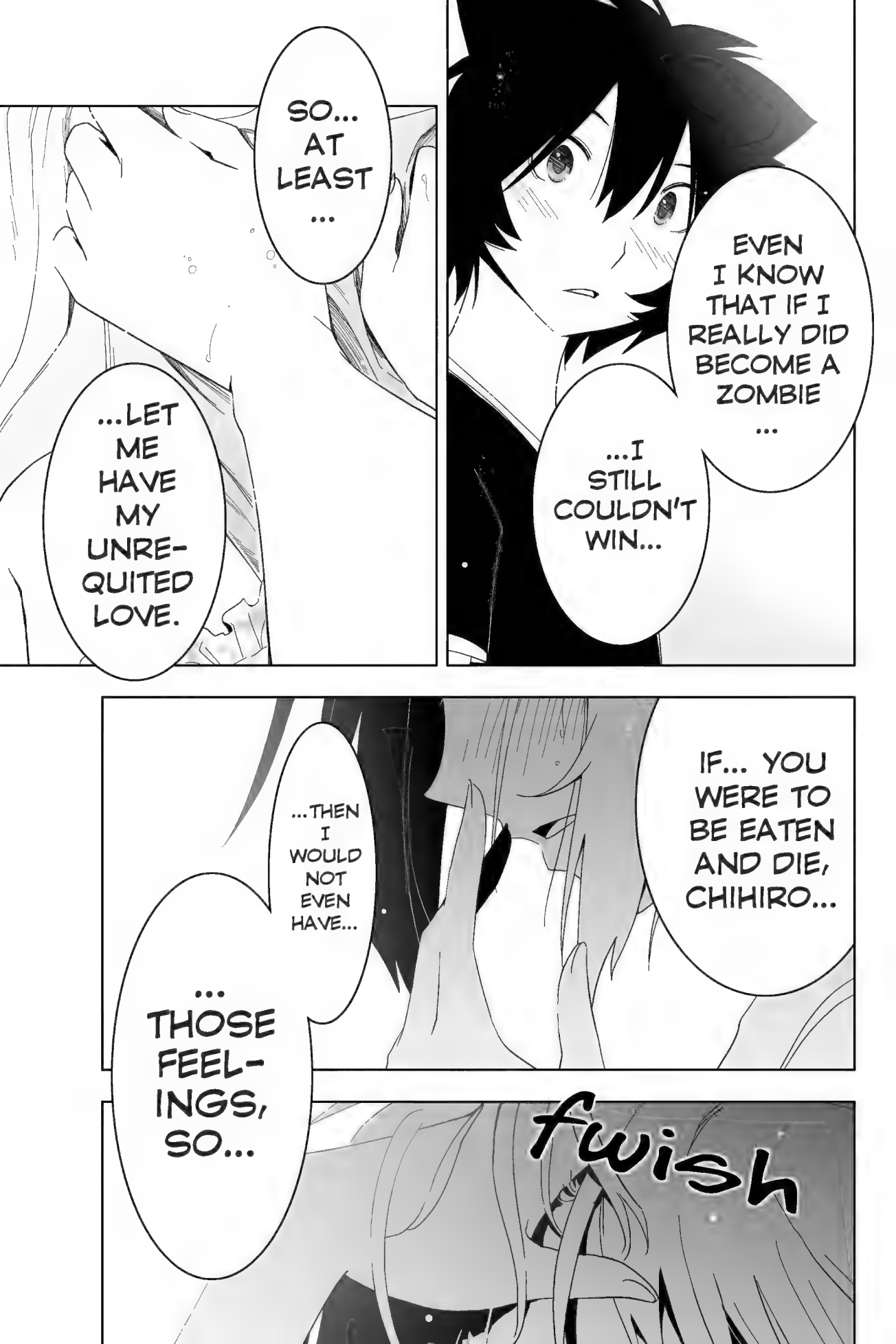

DUMB ASS
... TOO LATE.


SWING
...
BUT ...
SWING

BUT I...

NOW I...
WHOOSH


...
I KNOW ...


EVEN I KNOW THAT IF I REALLY DID BECOME A ZOMBIE ...
...I STILL COULDN'T WIN...
SO... AT LEAST ...
...LET ME HAVE MY UNRE-QUITED LOVE.
IF... YOU WERE TO BE EATEN AND DIE, CHIHIRO...
...THEN I WOULD NOT EVEN HAVE...
... THOSE FEEL-INGS, SO...
fwish

FROM NOW ON...
...THAT'S MY WISH FOR YOU.

...
THANK YOU FOR EVERY-THING.
RAN-KO ...

twee
twee
twee...

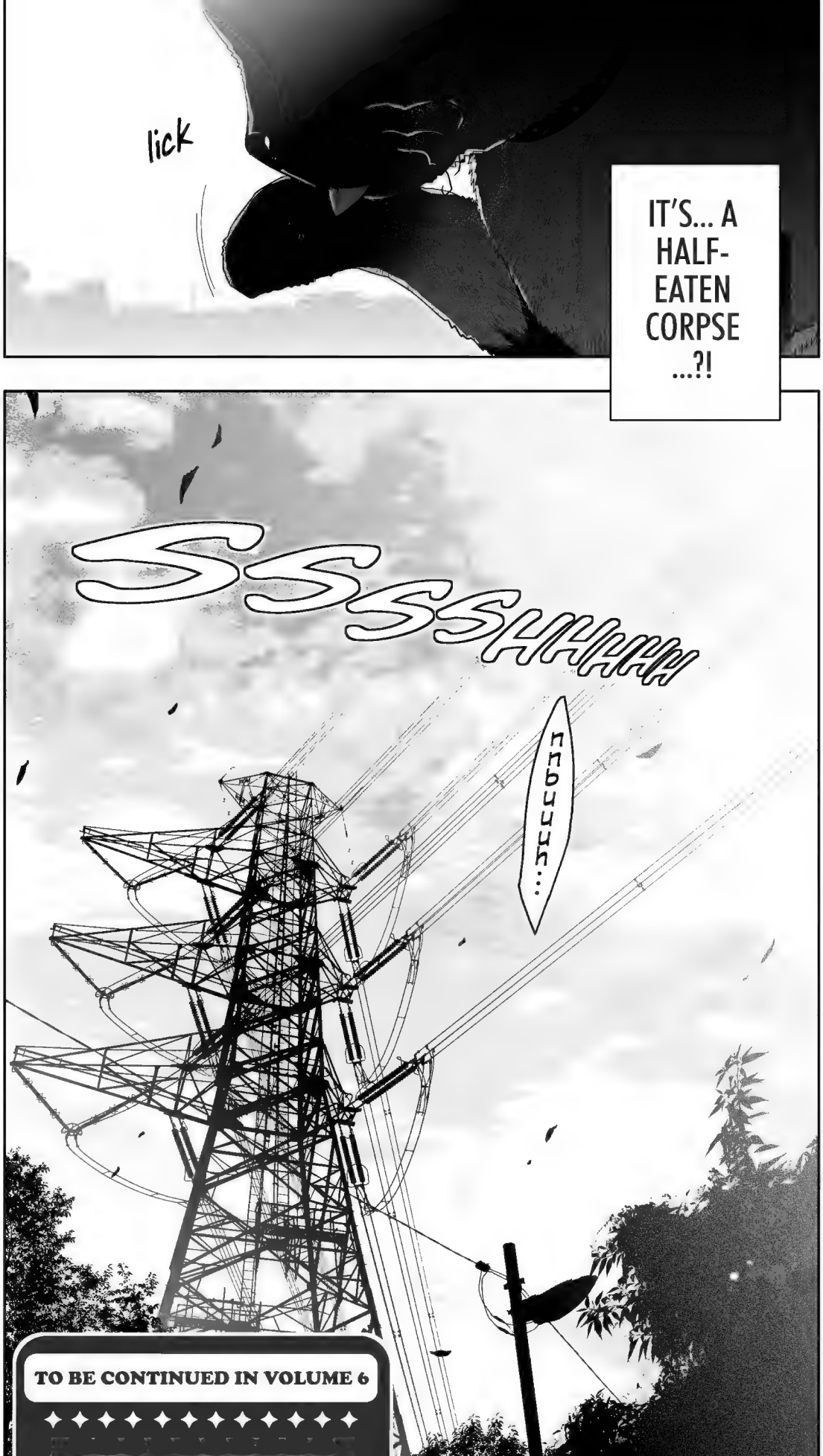
I'M SORRY FOR STAYING SO LONG.
CHI-HIRO-CHAN, ARE YOU GOING HOME?

tweet
tweet
GOOD MORN-ING!

NOT REALLY, HAHA-HA...
WOOM
...SO, HOW WAS LAST NIGHT? SEEMS LIKE YOU WERE GETTING PRETTY EXCITED.

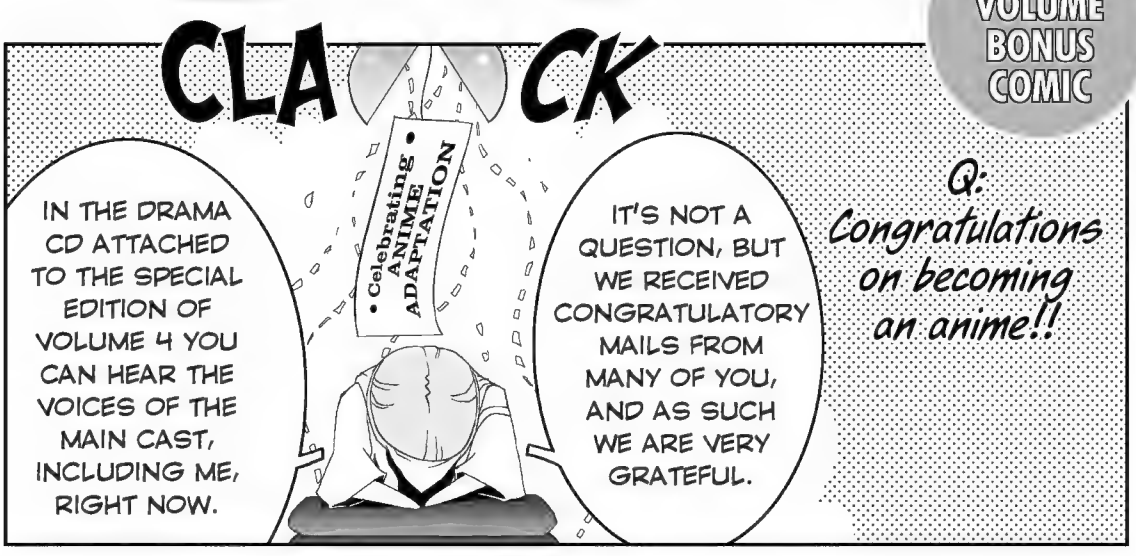
SHUDDER
NO ...!
AGAIN ...?!
LOOK, IN THE BAMBOO STAND ...
WHAT IS IT?
THIS SORT OF THING HAS BEEN HAPPENING MORE OFTEN RECENTLY FOR SOME REASON ...
HOW TERRI-BLE ...

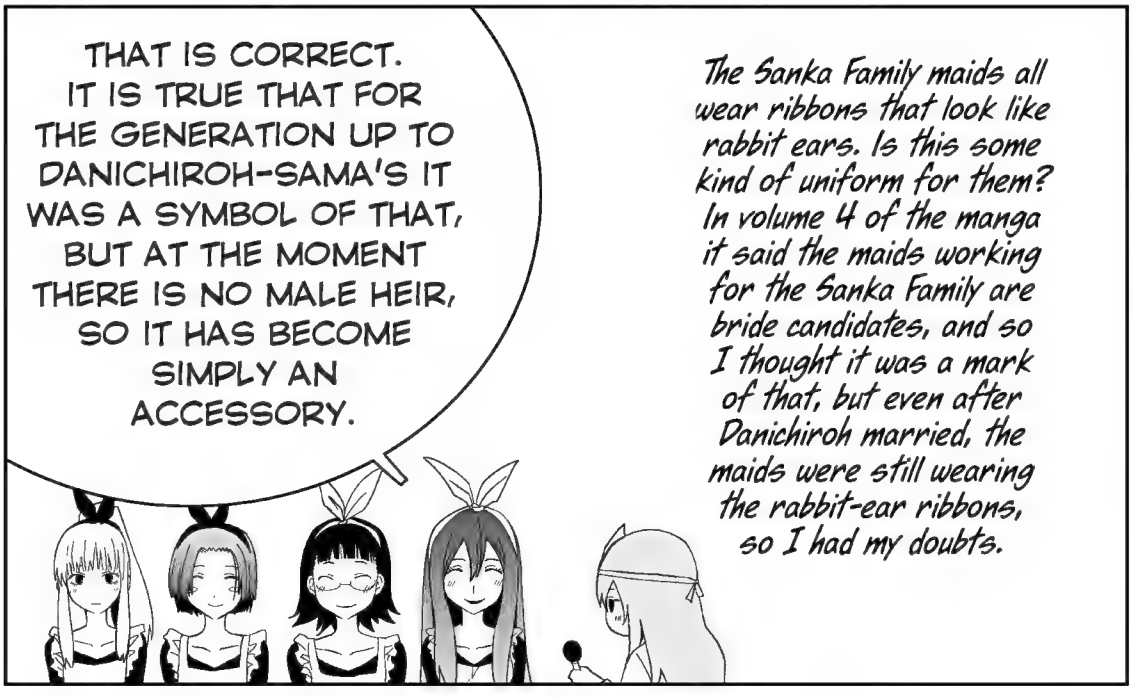
COULD IT BE THE WORK OF A STRAY DOG, I WONDER...? WHAT IF IT'S SOME CREEP...?
...THIS IS...
RMMMMOOOOOOOOOMMMMMM
...SOME ANIMAL...
...!!

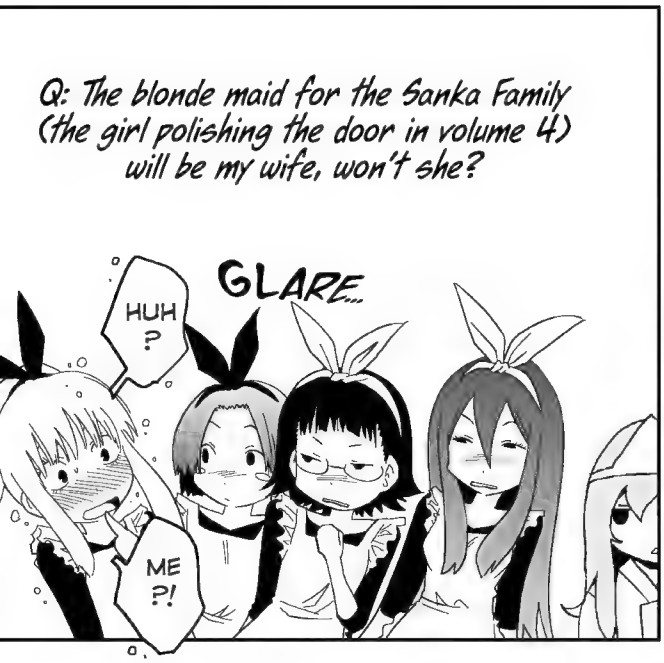

lick
IT'S... A HALF-EATEN CORPSE ...?!
SSSSHHHHH
nnnnnn...
TO BE CONTINUED IN VOLUME 6

Mitsuru Hattori presents
SANKAREA
Please feel free ...
...to wet your-self all you want.

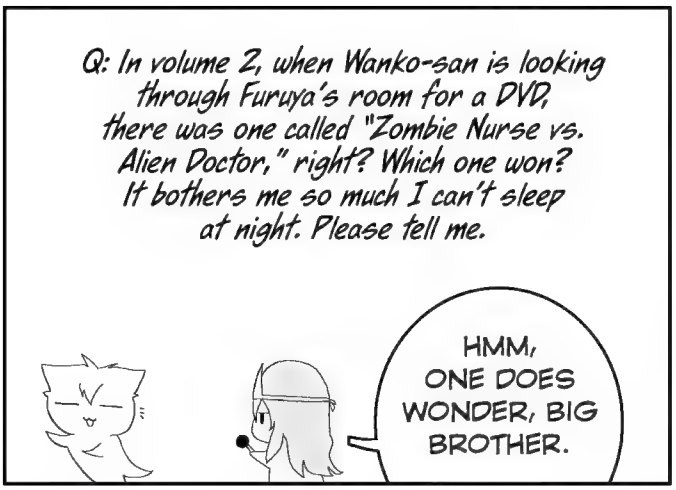
MERO'S ZEN RIDDLES
... WHICH IS SO POPULAR FOR SOME REASON !
WELL, IT DOESN'T QUITE GO THAT FAR, BUT LET'S BEGIN THIS CORNER OF THE VOLUME ...
WITHOUT THIS, YOU CAN NO LONGER TELL THE STORY OF "SANKA-REA" ...


END-OF-VOLUME BONUS COMIC
CLA CK
• Celebrating • ANIME ADAPTATION
IN THE DRAMA CD ATTACHED TO THE SPECIAL EDITION OF VOLUME 4 YOU CAN HEAR THE VOICES OF THE MAIN CAST, INCLUDING ME, RIGHT NOW.
IT'S NOT A QUESTION, BUT WE RECEIVED CONGRATULATORY MAILS FROM MANY OF YOU, AND AS SUCH WE ARE VERY GRATEFUL.
Q: Congratulations on becoming an anime!!


THAT IS CORRECT. IT IS TRUE THAT FOR THE GENERATION UP TO DANICHIROH-SAMA'S IT WAS A SYMBOL OF THAT, BUT AT THE MOMENT THERE IS NO MALE HEIR, SO IT HAS BECOME SIMPLY AN ACCESSORY.
The Sanka Family maids all wear ribbons that look like rabbit ears. Is this some kind of uniform for them? In volume 4 of the manga it said the maids working for the Sanka Family are bride candidates, and so I thought it was a mark of that, but even after Danichiroh married, the maids were still wearing the rabbit-ear ribbons, so I had my doubts.


Q: The blonde maid for the Sanka Family (the girl polishing the door in volume 4) will be my wife, won't she?
GLARE...
HUH ?
ME ?!

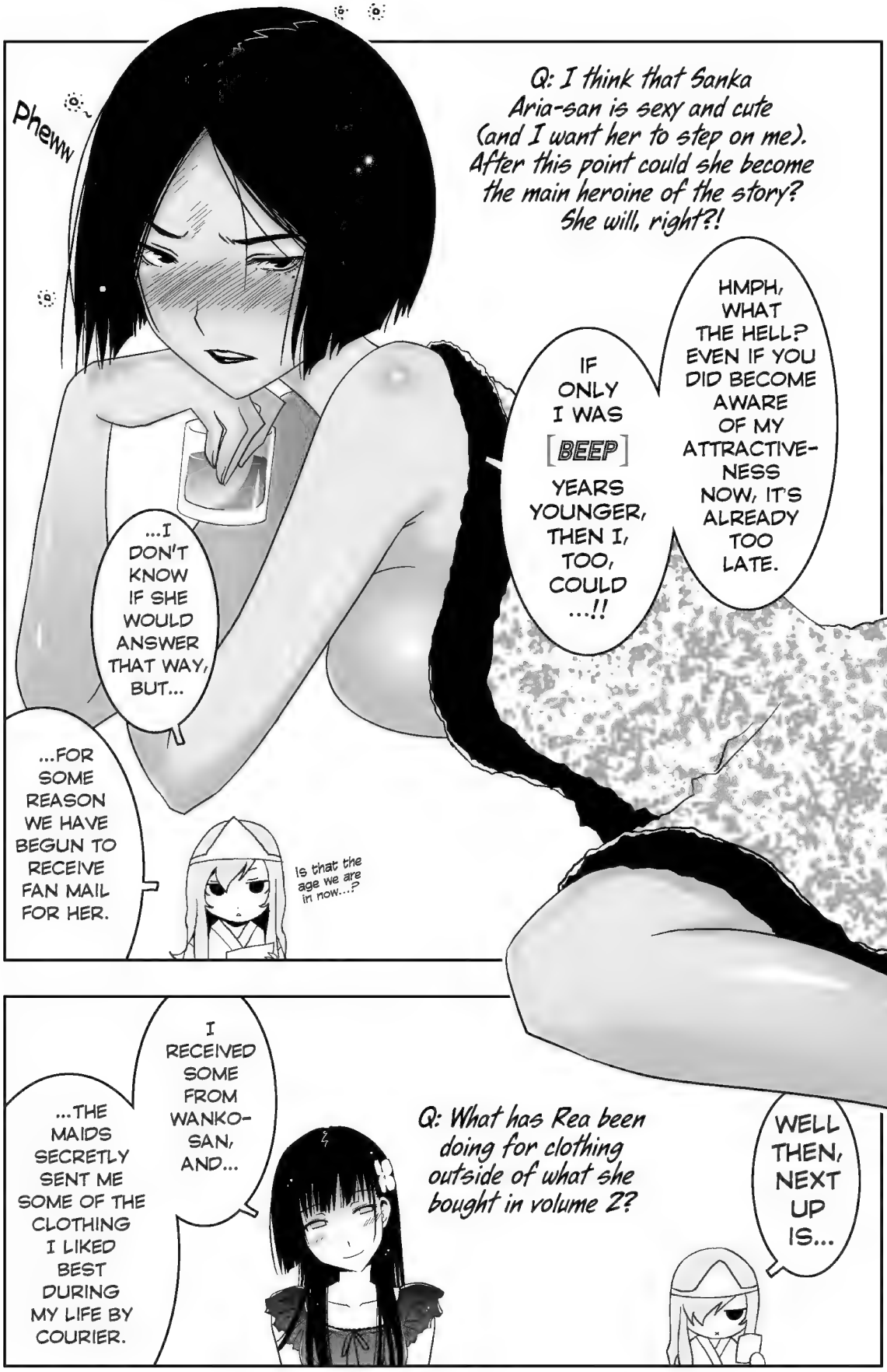
THERE IS ANOTHER MAIL HERE ADDRESSED TO THE MAIDS.
It's me.
Me?
MHH ?
I SEE ...


Q: In volume 2, when Wanko-san is looking through Furuya's room for a DVD, there was one called "Zombie Nurse vs. Alien Doctor," right? Which one won? It bothers me so much I can't sleep at night. Please tell me.
HMM, ONE DOES WONDER, BIG BROTHER.

WAIT A SECOND, HIMURO-SAN, WHY ARE YOU THE ONLY ONE POPULAR ENOUGH TO GET FAN MAIL ?!
SKREE
THAT'S RIGHT! EVEN THOUGH YOU DON'T HAVE MANY LINES IN THE MANGA OR THE DRAMA CD, YOU APPEAR ON THE VERY FIRST PAGE OF THIS VOLUME FOR NO GOOD REASON!!
SKREE
EVEN THOUGH WE ALL TALK WAAAAY MORE!!
SKREE
THEY'RE A LITTLE PARTIAL TO HER, AREN'T THEY?
RIIII-GHT ?!
...WELL THEN, AS YOU CAN SEE...

THERE YOU GO.
AND SO THE HOSPITAL EXPLODES, AND THEY ALL DIE, THE END.
Whew
-OMITTED-

OH! THANKS FOR ASKING ME!!
FIRST OFF, AS FAR AS HOW THE ALIEN DOCTOR VISITS EARTH... WELL, YOU SEE, THIS WORK HAS SOMEONE FAMOUS FOR HIS SPECIAL EFFECTS MAKEUP...


Phewww
Q: I think that Sanka Aria-san is sexy and cute (and I want her to step on me). After this point could she become the main heroine of the story? She will, right?!
HMPH, WHAT THE HELL? EVEN IF YOU DID BECOME AWARE OF MY ATTRACTIVE-NESS NOW, IT'S ALREADY TOO LATE.
IF ONLY I WAS [BEEP] YEARS YOUNGER, THEN I, TOO, COULD ...!!
...I DON'T KNOW IF SHE WOULD ANSWER THAT WAY, BUT...
...FOR SOME REASON WE HAVE BEGUN TO RECEIVE FAN MAIL FOR HER.
Is that the age we are in now...?
Q: What has Rea been doing for clothing outside of what she bought in volume 2?
WELL THEN, NEXT UP IS...
I RECEIVED SOME FROM WANKO-SAN, AND...
...THE MAIDS SECRETLY SENT ME SOME OF THE CLOTHING I LIKED BEST DURING MY LIFE BY COURIER.

Q: How does Mero really feel about Rea-Chan and Darin? Isn't it really inconvenient to suddenly have people living with you?
... NO.

"Mero's Zen Riddles" e-mail address:

(Put something like "Zen Riddles" or "Questions for Mero" in the subject line.)

kodanshacomics@randomhouse.com

*Questions we couldn't answer this time may be picked up in the next volume or after, as well.

TRANSLATION NOTES

p. 3, Heart Sutra

Sutras are Buddhist sermons or prayers. The Heart Sutra is probably the best known and most popular of all the Buddhist Sutras. Though they were originally written in Sanskrit, the version known in Japan has been transcribed into Chinese characters.

p. 106, Moe

Many readers are probably familiar with this term, but just in case, moe is a hard-to-define characteristic used mainly for young, cute, and somehow loveable anime characters. Mero in her current form probably qualifies for this term, but in her original form, she definitely didn't!

p. 106, NEET

A young person who is "not in education, employment or training." Meaning Mero here probably isn't a student, and doesn't have any kind of steady job or plans to move out of the family home for now.

p. 114, Sempai

Sempai is a generic honorific used towards upperclassmen, or anyone who's more senior than you (but not your boss, of course!)

p. 114, Noh

Noh or nogaku is an extremely stylized form of Japanese drama that has been performed for centuries. Most of the titles are dramatic, although comedic pieces do exist. Appreciation for noh is considered proof of taste and refinement, and many Japanese feel about noh similarly to how a lot of Americans feel about opera.

Shark vs. Rea

ATTACK ON TITAN
Winner of a 2011 Kodansha Manga Award
Humanity has been decimated!
A century ago, the bizarre creatures known as Titans devoured most of the world's population, driving the remainder into a walled stronghold. Now, the appearance of an immense new Titan threatens the few humans left, and one restless boy decides to seize the chance to fight for his freedom, and the survival of his species!
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